

Hafa Adai!

Outgoing lawmaker touts accomplishments. **PAGE 2**

CNMI posts record high in Korean, Chinese visitors. **PAGE 3**

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75¢

Contractor settles employees' wages

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» **Blames delay on late transfer of funds from bank**

Sino Great Wall International Engineering Co., Ltd. project manager and senior engineer Hou Jianlong said the late transmittal of their funds from a bank caused the delay in the salaries of close to 200 construction workers last month. Sino Great Wall is among the sub contractors tapped by Imperial Pacific International, Ltd. to build their multi-billion dollar casino hotel in Garapan. **See WAGES on Page 4**

JON PEREZ

The Imperial Pacific Resort construction site is seen in this file photo. One of the contractors of the casino hotel said the late transfer of funds from a bank caused the delay in workers' salaries.

Promoted police major pursuing court action vs DPS 'for fairness'

» **Camacho says DPS violated merit promotion program before**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lawrence M. Camacho was promoted to police major from police captain subsequently after he filed a dis-

crimination lawsuit last November, but he is still pursuing his court action, asserting that fairness matters in the Commonwealth police



Camacho

force's

merit promotion program.

"It matters because when an individual is appointed or promoted to a position unfairly, even if it is earned, the

See DPS on Page 4

Trump claim on N. Korean nukes may underestimate program

FOSTER KLUG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — U.S. President-elect Donald Trump took to Twitter to vow that North Korea won't develop a nuclear weapon capable of reaching parts of the United States. But it might already have done so.

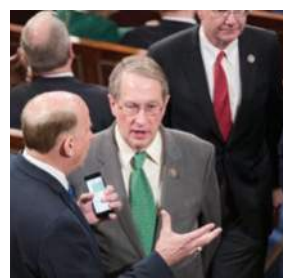
Views vary, sometimes wildly, on the exact state of North Korea's closely guarded nuclear

See TRUMP on Page 4



In this Oct. 16, 2016, file photo, a man watches a TV news program showing a file image of a missile launch conducted by North Korea, at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea.

INSIDE



NATION

Under pressure from President-elect Donald Trump, the GOP abruptly dropped plans to gut an independent congressional ethics board.

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WORLD

Iraqis who escaped Islamic State rule during the battle for Mosul are indulging in a newfound freedom—the right to check their phones.

PAGE 17



LIFE & STYLE

Janet Jackson and husband Wissam Al Mana welcomed their son, Eissa Al Mana, on Tuesday.

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Local

Outgoing lawmaker touts accomplishments

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro (R-Saipan) would leave the Legislature proudly after managing to author or co-sponsor several bills that were signed into laws that address critical issues in the Commonwealth. The veteran lawmaker decided not to seek re-election after her term ended in the 19th CNMI Legislature.

Ogumoro served in the first and second legislatures and came back in the 17th where she became part of the legislative body for the next six years. She was recently elected as vice president of the local GOP.

She thanked all of her colleagues for their support and understanding, and appreciated the hard work shown by the Legislative Bureau in the last two years during her speech in yesterday's sine die session at the House of Representatives' chamber inside the Hon. Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building.

"In spite of our differences, disagreements, and at times heated debates, we were able



Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro, right, delivers her farewell speech on the House floor as Reps. Angel A. Demapan and Antonio P. Sablan listen in yesterday's House's sine die session.

to work together as true leaders to pass key legislation that would make a difference in the lives of the people of our great Commonwealth," said Ogumoro, who also commended the leadership displayed by Speaker Rafael S. Demapan (R-Saipan) and vice speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan).

She introduced bills that would address the issues on education, health, public

safety and fire, the economy, infrastructure development, community programs, cultural and language preservation, and political interests and rights under the CNMI Constitution and Covenant signed with the United States government.

Public Law 19-63 that aims to create a commission that would examine the CNMI's political status with the U.S. and P.L. 19-70 that extended

the deadline and procedure for absentee ballots were some of the bills that she authored.

She considers PL 19-63 as her biggest accomplishment as it would give the Commonwealth a chance to examine the CNMI's current political relationship with the federal government. "To determine whether that relationship is working in their favor or not, and more importantly, whether their rights guaranteed under the Covenant are truly protected."

"As I continue to emphasize, it is extremely important that we closely assess our political relationship with the U.S. so we could fully comprehend the events that have occurred since the signing of the Covenant in 1975 which, if we do not put a stop to, would deprive us of all that we rightfully own, leaving us landless and marginalized in our own land."

The U.S. Ninth Circuit Court's 2005 ruling that the CNMI does not hold title to its submerged lands, extending U.S. immigration laws in 2008 without consult-

ing the people of the Commonwealth, former U.S. President George W. Bush's unilateral designation of the National Marine Monument that covers 92,000 square miles of the CNMI's waters, and the Ninth Circuit's recent ruling that upholds the decision of the CNMI U.S. District Court that allows non Northern Marianas Descent to vote on issues relative to Article XII are some of the issues that have an impact in the Commonwealth.

She said the 19th Legislature also worked closely with the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Victor B. Hocog as the CNMI showed strong signs of economic recovery as evident in the recent collection of an approximately \$265 million in gross revenues.

Ogumoro then wished her colleagues the best of luck and also advised them to continue to push for legislative issues that have a direct impact in the CNMI. "I pray for our continued success, and as we celebrate our accomplishments."

"I ask that we continue to

do all we can to allow our small island nation to become a strong and sustainable Commonwealth, where the right to control the [CNMI's] resources and destiny CNMI continue to remain in the hands of the people of these islands, and where an improved quality of life is enjoyed by all who reside here."

She also introduced two controversial bills, one of which is HB 19-82 that aims to abolish the Department of Public Lands and establish the Marianas Lands Corp. with a board of trustees having the power to manage and control public lands.

Ogumoro was also the author of HB 19-186 that would repeal and re-enact certain sections of PL 16-51 like giving the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board of trustees the powers and duties of governing, managing, and controlling its affairs. The CHCC's chief executive officer possesses the said powers with the seven-member board having only an advisory role.

The community expressed mixed feelings on both bills with some agreeing with Ogumoro's pieces of legislation while others are opposing it.

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Congratulations to
this week's winners!

Lucky 7 # 6*****22131, Kashi Kukkun, Marlon Ancheta,
Lisa Avendano, Dorothy McClure, Jonghwan Kim, Rex Richa,
Johnny Reyes, Lucky 7 # 6*****28075, Jeanne Rayphand

CNMI posts record high in Korean, Chinese visitors

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Records from Marianas Visitors Authority show the CNMI experienced an all-time high in Chinese and Korean visitors over the last decade.

Chinese arrivals have increased in arrivals since fiscal year 2006. MVA records show that Chinese arrivals, including tourists from Hong Kong, are at 38,385 for FY 2006 while MVA records show FY 2016 raking in 206,538 of arrivals without Hong Kong tourists, amounting to a 438.07-percent increase of Chinese tourist activity in the CNMI since FY 2006, the highest the CNMI has seen since.

Korean arrivals, like Chinese arrivals, have increased since FY 2006. MVA recorded Korean arrivals at 62,120 for FY 2006 before shooting up to 200,875 for FY 2016. These numbers display a 223.37-percent increase in Korean arrivals, the highest the CNMI has seen since.

A total of 443,812 visitor arrivals have been recorded for FY 2006 by MVA, while for FY 2016, MVA recorded 501,489 visitor arrivals, showing a 13-percent increase of visitor arrivals in the last decade while also reaching the half-million mark for the period of FY 2006 to FY 2016.

Chinese arrivals made up 41.18 percent of total visitor arrivals for FY 2016, while Korean arrivals consist of 40.06 percent of total visitor arrivals during the same fiscal year.

Other visiting countries

The CNMI's former No. 1

tourist market Japan has been steadily declining since its peak in 2006 at 280,292 visitor arrivals. MVA records show that in FY 2016 Japanese arrivals were at 62,120, a negative 351-percent difference compared to the peak a decade ago.

Philippine arrivals have been decreasing since FY 2006. MVA records display Filipino arrivals for FY 2006 to be at 3,690 arrivals, while FY 2016 shows one short of a thousand visitors (999 arrivals), amounting to a 72.93-percent decrease.

MVA recorded Russian visitors at 1,571 for FY 2006 and 1,796 arrivals for FY 2016. The Russian tourist market has been varying year to year, with the peak of Russian visits in FY 2014 at 13,856 arrivals before falling into a decline in FY 2015 at 2,760 arrivals. The Russian tourist market has been in a slump since then.

Similar to China, Hong Kong has been seeing an increase in visitor activity since FY 2012, with visitors arriving from Hong Kong at 672 arrivals, steadily increasing through the years up to FY 2016's 1,710 arrivals, increasing in volume at 154.47 percent during a four-year span.

MVA's forecast and issues

MVA managing director Chris Concepcion shared with *Saipan Tribune* that since FY 2011's devastating decline, with visitor arrivals totaling 338,106 tourists, arrivals have been doing increasingly well.

"Arrivals have been rising consistently on an annual basis, breaching the half million

mark in FY 2016 with 501,489 visitors, the first time we've reached that mark in over a decade," said Concepcion.

"We expect this trend to continue in the near term as new hotel developments come online. We've reached saturation point with hotel occupancy levels at an all-time high the past year," he added.

Concepcion said MVA and the CNMI welcomes visitors from all around the world.

He added growth is always the goal but throws caution against having explosive growth.

"It's not healthy for our economy, our environment and our infrastructure. Controlled growth is key," he said.

Concepcion added that manpower restrictions imposed by U.S. Congress is hindering the overall tourist experience of Saipan due to longer waiting times for U.S. Immigration clearance.

"It is very uncomfortable for tourists to wait up to three or more hours just to clear U.S. Immigration, in the middle of the night, tired and with children or senior citizens. We are hopeful Delegate Gregorio

Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is able to work with our partners in the federal government to ease the strain on manpower for U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the CNMI," said Concepcion.

"This problem is not unique to the CNMI as even our neighbors down in Guahan are reporting the same complaints from passengers," he added.

Another issue, Concepcion added, is the counter space at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport. Concepcion is slightly at ease, as

he claims the Commonwealth Ports Authority is preparing to publish their master plan for the Saipan Airport.

"This document is highly anticipated as it will provide them guidance on what areas need expansion and improvement at the Saipan Airport," said Concepcion.

"We look forward to working with the airlines, CPA, CBP, Transportation Security Administration, CNMI Customs, and other partners to provide a positive experience for our tourists upon arrival and at departure."

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 12, 2017

5:00 PM, Zoning Board Conference Room

2nd Fl., Joeten Dandan Commercial Building

Tel: 234-9661 • Fax: 234-9666 • www.zoning.gov.mp

A. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 12/01/2016 meeting minutes
Adoption of 12/09/2016 special meeting minutes
5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings: None

C. Communication

D. Old Business

1. Review of revised Parking Plan as stated in conditions for Conditional Use Permit No. 2016-3079, SunLeader (Saipan) Company, Ltd, dba SunLeader Hotel

E. New Business

1. Office Operations Reports (Permits, Enforcement)

F. Executive (Closed) Session

G. Miscellaneous

- a. Other Matters
- b. Announcements
- c. Next Meeting

H. Adjourn

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Administrator, Therese T. Ogomoro, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman



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SNILD chair: Transcription not an easy task

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan) said transcribing all audio recordings of their sessions is not an easy task and takes a lot of time.

The Precinct 2 lawmaker is clarifying the issue after no journals were adopted in last

Tuesday's SNILD session as all audio recording were not yet transcribed.

Sablan said he had already asked Legislative Bureau acting director Antonette Villagomez to assess the situation. "Transcription is not an easy job that's why I asked the acting director to look into it."

"We want to know if the staff is overwhelmed by the job since transcription is the

clerk's job. The House clerk has its own staff and so is the Senate but for the three [Legislative] delegations [Saipan, Tinian, and Rota] there's only one, Alice Deleon Guerrero."

He said that he had instructed Villagomez to make a study if there's a need to hire more employees, just specifically focusing on journals. "She told me that she would prioritize the issue and start looking

into the best possible way the audio recordings would be transcribed. She would look into all avenues available on how to quickly finish all transcriptions."

Sablan said there's also available technology that automatically transcribes audio recordings as suggested by Sen. Justo Quitugua (Ind-Saipan). "These are some of the things that I asked [Villagomez] to

look into. Either we hire additional staff or have a private firm do the job."

"And if possible, the Legislature can appropriate funds for this. The journals are important and it is a constitutional mandate. We must make sure all audio recordings are transcribed and put in our archives for future use."

He added that it is not only the SNILD that is experiencing the problem and even mentioned the House where 18 journals of all digital audio recordings

were adopted in yesterday's sine die session.

"That's why during the SNILD's sine die session, [Floor Leader Angel Demapan] made a motion to adopt and accept all audio recordings. Part of the motion is to allow the Legislative Bureau staff to continue with the transcription," said Sablan.

Drafting legislation and writing committee reports, resolutions, and other House communications are some of the Legislative Bureau's duties aside from the transcription of all audio recordings.

TRUMP

From Page 1

and missile programs, but after five atomic test explosions and a rising number of ballistic missile test launches, some experts believe North Korea can arm short- and mid-range missiles with atomic warheads.

That would allow Pyongyang to threaten U.S. forces stationed in Asia and add teeth to its threat last year to use nuclear weapons to "sweep Guam, the base of provocations, from the surface of the earth."

Guam is a strategically important U.S. territory in the Pacific. Some experts see the U.S. mainland as potentially within reach in as little as five years if North Korea's nuclear progress isn't stopped.

Trump's tweet on Monday night U.S. time was in response to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who said Sunday in his annual New Year's address that preparations for launching an intercontinental ballistic missile have "reached the final

stage." He did not explicitly say a test was imminent.

Trump tweeted, "North Korea just stated that it is in the final stages of developing a nuclear weapon capable of reaching parts of the U.S. It won't happen!"

The morning after the tweet, top aide Kellyanne Conway said that while Trump was putting North Korea "on notice," he was "not making policy at the moment." Conway, who will serve as Trump's White House counselor, said that as president, Trump "will stand between (North Korea) and missile capabilities."

North Korea, poor, suspicious of outsiders and governed by a third-generation dictator, is used to being underestimated and mocked. Few believed it could build a nuclear program that would keep U.S. presidents since the early 1990s up at night.

Armed to the teeth, acutely bellicose and not afraid to push tensions on the Korean Peninsula to the brink, Pyongyang could be among Trump's top foreign policy challenges.

Here's a look at how

close North Korea may already be to proving Trump's tweet wrong:

THE NUKES

There's a general consensus that Pyongyang has made significant nuclear and missile progress under Kim, who took over after his father, Kim Jong Il, died in late 2011.

Kim has conducted three of the country's five total nuclear tests, including two last year. Propaganda out of Pyongyang makes clear that North Korea views nuclear weapons as essential to keeping at bay U.S. and South Korean forces it says are intent on its destruction.

Some U.S. experts believe North Korea may have enough fuel for about 20 bombs and can add a possible half dozen more each year.

Fuel is one thing; it's much more difficult to develop the technology needed to build bombs small enough to fit on missile tips.

Each new nuclear test, however, pushes the North another big step toward its goal of an arsenal of nuclear missiles capa-

ble of hitting the U.S. mainland.

THE MISSILES

Outsiders don't know for sure whether North Korea can arm any of its ballistic missiles, regardless of range, with nuclear warheads yet.

But Siegfried Hecker, a leading North Korea nuclear expert, wrote after last year's September nuclear test that outsiders should now assume that Pyongyang has "designed and demonstrated" atomic warheads that can be placed on short- and possibly medium-range missiles.

North Korea may deploy a "working, nuclear-tipped ballistic missile" by 2020, according to another expert, Euan Graham, director of the International Security Program at the Lowy Institute.

North Korea has an arsenal of short-range Scuds and mid-range Rodong missiles, and some South Korean experts believe those can already be armed with nukes.

That would put in danger the roughly 28,000 U.S. forces in South Korea and another 50,000 in Japan.

filed a petition for judicial review of agency action and injunction against DPS and CSC for allegedly not selecting him to the position of director of police despite he is the only one qualified.

Tarkong, also a 25-year veteran of the CNMI's police force, also filed the same petition against DPS and CSC for alleged discriminatory practices as to hiring and promotions after he was not promoted to the rank of a sergeant.

Camacho and Tarkong, through counsel Torres, have requested the court to issue an order enjoining defendants CSC and DPS from any further action relating to the filling of the director of police and sergeant positions until such time as the court may complete a review of the agency actions in this matter.

Camacho and Tarkong asked the court to, among other things, compel DPS and CSC to comply with the Personnel System Rules and Regulations and the competitive selection, merit increases, and promotion processes.

Suspected 'ice' distributor ordered detained pending trial

U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy has ordered the detention pending trial against a suspected distributor of methamphetamine or "ice."

Kennedy said after reviewing the pretrial services report and affording defendant Yang Zou an opportunity for a detention hearing, she concludes that he must be detained pending trial.

Kennedy noted that there is a rebuttable presumption that no condition or combination of conditions of release will assure Zou's appearance at court proceedings and the safety of the community because there is probable cause to believe that Zou commit-

ted a drug crime, for which he could be required to serve 10 or more years in prison.

During the hearing, Kennedy said, Zou offered no evidence to rebut the presumption and requested the court at a later time to reopen the detention hearing should such evidence become available.

Zou was charged with one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

According to the indictment, the defendant allegedly intentionally possessed with intent to distribute "ice" last April 15. The amount of "ice" involved was not indicated in the charging document. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

WAGES

From Page 1

More than 50 workers held a protest rally last month after Sino Great Wall allegedly failed to pay them their wages for close to two months. CNMI Department of Labor officials met with both parties two weeks ago to settle the issue.

"We met with the employees at Labor with the secretary and other officials twice. We had no problem being investigated because it was just a small problem. Now everything is settled and we already paid the salaries of all employee. The bank transfer was delayed for two days," said Huo.

"All 185 workers already went home last December after their contract expired. But all of them received their salaries before they went back home," said Huo, who added that their contracts only lasted five months as they are only tasked to work on all concrete projects of the Imperial Pacific Resort.

IPI hired other contractors to build the other structures of the hotel with other companies involved in putting up the steel frames and external façade.

Huo said that their company, Sino Great Wall, would continue their work once the other contractors are done with their

respective jobs. "We're going to continue with our work in the coming months as soon as they are finished with their projects."

"We're going to do the finishing touches like plastering of the walls, putting up the flooring, and other things that need to be done in each room. We're going to also do the interior decorating like putting the furniture in the rooms."

Wages, allowances

Documents provided by Sino Great Wall to *Saipan Tribune* showed that they had paid their 185 workers a total of \$1,338,032.03 in salaries and other allowances since July 2016. They paid \$1,240,314.03 in wages and \$86,700 in cash vouchers. All of their workers stayed at Heaven II apartment provided by IPI while Sino Great Wall took care of their meals.

They paid three groups of their workers a total sum of \$66,646 in July, while \$72,761 in August. In September, they disbursed \$118,795.55 and \$210,800.48 to three batches of their laborers in October.

Three more groups received their wages from October to November that totaled \$596,208, while another two clusters earned \$189,554 for November alone.

DPS

From Page 1

fact that the unfair process was followed can have a distracting, destructive, or even devastating effect on morale within the organization," said Camacho, through his counsel, Robert T. Torres.

In Camacho's opposition yesterday to the Department of Public Safety's motion to dismiss his lawsuit, Torres said fairness matters in the merit promotion program because when employees leap-frog steps in the career ladder over others, even those who are not jumped over are negatively affected.

"Fairness matters in the merit promotion program because failing to follow the rules in promotion procedures may also lead to corruption within an organization," the lawyer said.

Importantly, Torres pointed out, fairness in the Commonwealth's merit promotion program matters because it is the law.

"In fact, it is one of the foundational concepts upon which

the entire personnel service system is built," Torres added.

The lawyer noted that Camacho has seen DPS violate this basic concept of fairness in the merit promotion program before, has seen the courts order DPS not to engage in non-objective practices as to promotions based on merit, and wants this process to stop for himself and his fellow officers.

Torres said Camacho pursued his grievance and seeks judicial review of agency action because DPS and the Civil Service Commission did not act fairly in the examination announcement 14-142 process.

Torres said the court should deny DPS' motion to dismiss Camacho's case, and allow Camacho's petition to proceed towards a hearing of his grievance because the court has jurisdiction over the subject matter.

The lawyer said rather than encouraging a hearing to take place to further employee standing of and confidence in the merit promotion program, DPS instead chose to fight such openness with

a motion to dismiss that fails to give the court guidance on the standard it is to apply, is unsupported by the facts pled by Camacho or any other facts, and fails to even support some of its motions with ascertainable arguments.

Last week, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho dismissed the Civil Service Commission as a co-defendant in the separate discrimination lawsuits filed by Camacho and Police Officer 3 Jason T. Tarkong.

The judge issued the dismissal order after Camacho and Tarkong, through their counsel Torres, and CSC, through counsel assistant attorney general Michael Witry, filed a stipulation to the partial dismissal of the cases.

The stipulation resolves CSC's role in the cases. It means that the Department of Public Safety is the remaining defendant in the lawsuits. It also means that the judge shall hear Camacho's and Tarkong's grievance, including DPS' motion to dismiss the matter.

Camacho, a 25-year veteran of the CNMI's police force,

Saipan Computer Services celebrates 30th year

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

Saipan Computer Services, one of the oldest computer retail and service companies in the CNMI, turned 30 years old last Aug. 8, 2016.

SCS business development director Jerry Tiu and SCS managing director Kazuko Kawabe-Tiu said they were able to reach 30 years on Saipan due to the many customers that have supported the business.



Tiu

"We owe everything that SCS has become to the customers that have been with us through the good and the bad," said Tiu.

Tiu shared that SCS began with the same group of individuals that started United Micronesia Development Association.

"The group of individuals who formed UMDA incorporated SCS in 1986. They came up with a distributed computer system that rented out processing capabilities," said Tiu.

He said in 1988 when the microcomputer came out business was not doing well.

"They readjusted the company to become one that focused on microcomputers and sales," recalled Tiu.

"In 1994, they approached me and asked if I wanted to take over it as they went on to other ventures. That is how we

started," added Tiu.

Plans for the future

According to Tiu, most companies are planning to survive in 2017. Such is the case for SCS.

"We have been experiencing difficulties since the last two years. It does not seem like it is going to become any better yet, so for now we just have to be prudent. SCS will remain to act on what the market wants and at the same time, SCS

won't overextend because of the challenges we are currently facing," said Tiu.

When asked about branching out to the other islands of the CNMI or to Guam, Tiu said not at this time. He, however, said on occasion SCS technicians, complete with their equipment, have been sent to Tinian and Rota. Tiu also shared SCS has even received units for repair from Guam.

"The reality is the shipping is also an issue. Even sending people is a challenge, because sometimes they stay longer than they intend to," said Tiu, referring to looking at shipping units from Tinian, Rota, and Guam rather than opening other branches.

Tiu shares that SCS is looking forward to serving the people of the CNMI as their demands change.

"We will continue to be sensitive to the market—what they want; what they need; what is applicable; and as those run out, we will do our best to make these available to the market... Given that these are feasible," said Tiu.

He also greeted the community a bountiful 2017.

"I wish you all a happy, healthy, and wealthy year," he added.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Computer Services celebrated its 30th year of doing business in the CNMI last August.



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Payment of over \$36K to Settlement Trustee OK'd

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood approved yesterday the payment of \$36,500.94 to the Settlement Fund trustee for professional services and expenses incurred for a 10-month period in 2016.

Saying she is extremely satisfied with the work performed by Trustee's principal representative Joyce C.H. Tang, Tydingco-Gatewood in a separate order yesterday ordered the Settlement Fund to pay Trustee Tang from the funds being held in the trust in the sum of \$5,294.52 incurred for September 2015 to February 2016.

The \$5,294.52 is the total amount ordered retained by the court for Tang's monthly professional fees billed during the period beginning September 2015 through February 2016.

With respect to the \$36,500.94 payment, the judge said she reviewed the invoices and finds Tang's request for compensation and reimbursement of expenses to

be reasonable.

Tydingco-Gatewood said she is satisfied with Tang's work performed during this time frame.

The judge said the \$36,500.94 represents 90 percent of the professional fees and 100 percent of all expenses incurred during the months of Feb. 2016 through Nov. 2016.

Tydingco-Gatewood ordered the Settlement Fund to hold in trust to the credit of the Trustee the sum of \$4,015.25, which represents of the Trustee's professional fees for this time period.

The Trustee may petition for release of the 10 percent retainage on a quarterly basis, subject to the court's satisfaction of the Trustee's work and any objections to the compensation requests.

Last June, Tydingco-Gatewood ordered the Settlement Fund to pay the Trustee \$39,196.92 to for professional services and expenses incurred for a four-month period, October 2015 through January 2016. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Judge wants immediate hearing of convicted couple's request for release

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona wants to immediately hear the request of a couple who were convicted for harboring an illegal alien to remain out of custody pending their appeal.

Manglona set the motion to be decided on an abbreviated schedule considering that the

U.S. Marshal Service has not yet ordered the couple Francisco Muna Tydingco and Lili Zhang Tydingco to report to start serving their prison term but could do so quite soon.

After the Tydingcos were sentenced last Dec. 9, the court permitted them to remain out of custody under supervision pending notice from the U.S.

Marshal to surrender to serve their sentences.

Manglona will hear the motion no later than Friday, and the motions will be heard on Jan. 9, 2017 at 3pm.

The couple told the court that their motion for release pending appeal is being unopposed.

The judge said any motion

that the U.S. government does not oppose will be decided on the papers.

The judge said if the government files an opposition brief or either motion, the Tydingcos, whose motion is opposed, may file a reply no later than today, Thursday.

Last June, a federal court jury rendered a unanimous

guilty verdict finding jurors the Tydingco couple guilty of one count of harboring an alien.

The offense carries a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment.

Last Dec. 9, Manglona sentenced Lili Tydingco to 10 months imprisonment with credit for time served. She sentenced Francisco Muna Tydingco to 21 months imprisonment, with credit for time served.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe appeared as counsel for the U.S. government.

The Tydingcos, through their counsel, appealed, asking the U.S. District Court for the NMI to reverse their conviction and vacate their sentence.

A federal grand jury indicted the couple for allegedly receiving money to harbor two illegal Chinese aliens, including a child they enrolled at a public school.

According to Homeland Security Investigations Task Force officer Jesse Dubrall, the child's purported uncle, Rongxue Liu, stated in an interview that he paid Lili Tydingco \$7,000 in exchange for helping him enter into a fake marriage and obtain a green card.

Dubrall said the parents of the child admitted that they agreed to pay Lili Tydingco between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to take their child to Saipan and get her a green card. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

OVR successfully closes 48 cases, representing 118-pct increase

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation closed a total of 48 cases in Fiscal Year 2016 as successfully rehabilitated. This number represents an amazing 118-percent increase from the previous year's case closure information.

OVR said they were able to successfully close the cases in partnership with consumers and their families, employers, service and training providers, and other partners or stakeholders.

In addition, OVR would like to share with the public, the following statistical highlights for FY 2016 in comparison to FY 2015:

■ Total VR caseload was 341 individuals, which represents a 10.4-percent increase,

■ Total number of employers/businesses who partnered with OVR to provide Work Experience Training and/or On-the-Job Training to clients was 12, which represents a

9.1-percent increase,

■ Total number of employers/businesses who hired OVR consumers was 13, which represents a 225-percent increase,

■ Total federal and state funding was \$1,134,336, which represents an 8.4-percent increase,

■ Basic Support/Supported Employment (BS/SE) total case services expenditure was \$302,559, which represents a 16.45-percent increase,

■ Pre-Employment Transition Services total expenditure was \$58,143, which represents an 85.2-percent increase, and

■ Independent Living/Older Blind (ILOB) total case services expenditure was \$39,785, which represents a 52.68-percent increase.

OVR said the path to achieving successful employment outcomes is not always straight and smooth, but each stakeholder's spirit and tenacity to moving passed obstacles

is what culminates in success, at least that is the case with the 48 cases that were closed last fiscal year. When the going gets tough, this group of individuals does not give up because they believe in their clients and in the pursuit of each client's dream.

OVR's hard working professional and paraprofessional counseling staff members are Rose Ichio, Jane Tudela, Jiana Camacho, Colleen Diaz, John Cabrera, and Matilde Selepeo. These are the faces of our frontline field staff that dedicate their time and energy to providing quality and timely services to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities and outcomes for our clientele. They work with an amazing team of various stakeholders who are equally invested in seeing through each case through the lenses of a winning attitude. And

most importantly, the consumers play a critical part in achieving their success through a development of their goals, continued hard work, and partnerships with their family, OVR team, employers, service and training providers, and partners/stakeholders.

OVR's primary strategy for achieving its program goals and objectives is through ongoing collaboration and coordination with the teams of each particular case. Appropriately, and in the words of Henry Ford, which are worth echoing, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." With the new year here, the OVR would like to extend its thanks to the many community members who work in collaboration with us, and invite you all to another year of hard work and continued success. **(OVR)**

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Wishing our beautiful princess, Lurissa "Chicha" Cepeda, a happy, happy birthday!! May your day be filled with rainbows and sprinkles! Sending you big hugs and kisses all the way from Las Vegas. We love and miss you very much! Greetings come from U. Jun, A. Nao, Jelena, Kaiden, and baby.



SAIPAN-DA BACKPACK GIVEAWAY

Saipan-da and island "Chamorittas" greet flights arriving on Saipan on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in December 2016, distributing over 800 backpacks on behalf of the Marianas Visitors Authority to children up to 12 years old.



Saipan-da gets shares a hug with children at Saipan International Airport on Christmas Day 2016. As part of its annual Happy Children in Paradise campaign during the summer and holiday seasons, the Marianas Visitors Authority and Saipan-da greeted 32 flights arriving on Saipan on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, distributing over 800 backpacks children up to 12 years old.

MVA
Saipan-da distributes over 800 backpacks to children up to 12 years old at Saipan International Airport on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in December 2016.

13th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18-19

The 13th Tinian Hot Pepper Festival will be held over Presidents Day weekend on Feb. 18-19, 2017, highlighting the island's famously potent "donne sali" pepper.

The event will be held at Kammer Beach within walking distance of the seaport and downtown San Jose. Available hotels on island include Fleming Hotel, Lion House, Lorilyn's and Street Motel. Air service is provided by Star Marianas. Some hotels offer airport shuttle as well.

The event is also co-organized by the Tinian Mayor's Office and sponsored by

MVA members. Activities will include the 65K Pika Bike Race on Feb. 18 at 6am, cooking competitions, indigenous craft sales, and live entertainment including cultural dances. Sample a variety of local dishes, catch the *umang* (hermit crab) races, join numerous sports activities (including beach volleyball and dragon boat races), or join the *donni sali* eating competition, itself. Festival times will be from 2pm to 11pm on Feb. 18 and from 11am to 11pm on Feb. 19.

Tinian is also accessible within minutes of Saipan via airplane or via connect-

ing flights from Rota and Guam. For more information, contact the MVA Tinian office at 433-9365 or email at vborja@mymarianas.com. (MVA)

The Marianas Visitors Authority will hold the 13th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on the picturesque island of Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, on Feb. 18-19, 2017.

MVA



Saipan Marathon 2017 on March 25

Saipan Marathon 2017 has been set for March 25, 2017, with the Marianas Visitors Authority already heavily promoting the marathon overseas. The event will again include 10K, half-marathon, full marathon, and 50K courses, as well.

Early registration by Feb. 24, 2017, for the 50K and marathon is \$55 for U.S. and NMI participants, and \$45 for half-marathon and 10K participants. The fee for high school and junior high school students is \$30 (student ID required). An additional late fee of \$10 will apply to registrations submitted after Feb. 24. The last day to register for the event will be on March 10, 2017, at 5pm. Registration will include the awards banquet, a finishers t-shirt, and a certificate of completion.

"We're looking forward to a great year of sporting events here in the Northern Marianas including our annual Saipan Marathon on March 25," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "As always, we are receiving strong interest from the local community and Japan in the marathon, and we are also looking at expanding our participation from other countries even more in 2017."

All competitors are required to pick up their race packets on March 24, 2017, at Paseo De Marianas, without exception. The start will take place at the American Memorial Park at 4am for the 50K and the Marathon, at 5am for the half-marathon, and at 5:45am for the 10K. The cut-off time for the 50K and marathon will be 8:30am near the intersection of Navy Hill and Chalan Pale Arnold Road.

Entry forms are available at the MVA office located in on Beach Road in San Jose or on the MVA official web-

site Event Calendar at www.mymarianas.com. For more information contact Ed Diaz at the MVA at 664-3210 or through email at ediaz@mymarianas.com.

The MVA will also host the Marianas Sunset Fun Run on Jan. 20, the first 70.3 Saipan Ironman on March 11, and XTERRA Saipan Championships on March 18, 2017. (MVA)



MVA

The spanking new 2017 Saipan Marathon logo is seen here. The event is set for March 25, 2017.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION TO BID CUC-ITB-17-015

SALE AND REMOVAL OF SCRAP MATERIALS FROM THE WAREHOUSE

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is inviting interested individuals and firms to bid on CUC Scrap materials located in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Bid Package may be obtained at no charge upon registration at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

One (1) original and One (1) copy must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-ITB-17-015, CUC Sale & Removal of Scrap Materials from the Warehouse" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 17, 2017**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Bidders must sign a Waiver of Liability, removing CUC's liability from claims resulting from violations relating to the removal and disposal of the scrap materials. CUC shall transfer and assign the scrap materials to the prospective bidder in an "As is, Where is" condition. By accepting the transfer and assignment, the bidder acknowledges that CUC has made no representation or warranties of the merchantability, quality, fitness, and condition of the scrap materials.

The scrap materials may be inspected by appointment only, between the hours of 9:00 AM thru 3:00 PM Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, by contacting CUC Warehouse Division at telephone no. 322-6585.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in the best interest of the CUC.

All inquiries must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 9, 2017, to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Technician for Procurement via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer



PUBLIC NOTICE



Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Fourteenth and Fifteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special and Swearing-in meeting on Monday, January 9, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. at the Office of the Commissioner of Education Conference Room, Building 1211 in Capitol Hill, Saipan.

CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL AND SWEARING-IN MEETING AGENDA Monday, January 9, 2017 8:30 a.m.

Office of the Commissioner of Education
Conference Room, Building 1211, Capitol Hill, Saipan

POSTING OF COLORS Kagman High School JROTC Ayuyu Battalion

U.S. NATIONAL AND CNMI ANTHEM
Rhythm n Harmony Glee Club and Chorale
of Marianas High School

FOURTEENTH (14th) CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Call to Order
Herman T. Guerrero, Chairman

Roll Call
Adoption of Agenda

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Cynthia I. Deleon Guerrero, M.Ed., Commissioner of Education

MaryLou S. Ada
Denise (Tanya) R. King
Janice A. Tenorio

REMARKS OF OUTGOING BOE MEMBERS

MaryLou S. Ada
Denise (Tanya) R. King
Janice A. Tenorio

FIFTEENTH (15th) CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION INAUGURAL MEETING

RECOGNITION OF INCOMING BOE MEMBERS

Cynthia I. Deleon Guerrero, M.Ed., Commissioner of Education

MaryLou S. Ada
Sergeant Major Herman M. Atalig
Janice A. Tenorio

OATH OF OFFICE

Honorable Alexandro C. Castro
Chief Justice, CNMI Supreme Court

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Tiberius D. Mocanu, Esq. – Legal Counsel, BOE
Pro Tem Chair

SPECIAL REMARKS OF INCOMING BOE MEMBERS

MaryLou S. Ada
Sergeant Major Herman M. Atalig
Janice A. Tenorio

ADJOURNMENT

RETIREMENT OF COLORS
Kagman High School JROTC Ayuyu Battalion

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) issued the following statement yesterday after she was sworn in as a member of the 115th Congress:

"I once again thank the people of Guam for the trust and confidence they continue to place in me to serve as their representative in Congress. I do not take for granted the incredible responsibility they have entrusted to me to be our island's voice in Washington, and I will continue to build on the progress that we have made over the last 14

years. As we begin the 115th Congress, there are a number of key issues that I will continue to advocate for, especially on issues to build our economy, improve wages and retirement opportunities, advance education, and honor our man'amko.

"However, ultimately Republicans plan an aggressive agenda that will attempt to implement their ultra conservative agenda. I will work with the other Delegates to try and address any of our legacy issues should comprehensive tax reform occur or should

Bordallo begins eighth term in Congress

there be an effort at immigration reform. Further, if the Republicans get serious about replacing Obamacare we will work to ensure the territories are considered fairly and that our Medicaid funding is not

arbitrarily cut."

Bordallo also administered yesterday the oath of office for the new officers of the Guam Society of America. Established in 1952, the society is the oldest Chamorro

organization outside of Guam. The new officers are president Aylene Mafnas, vice president

Paul Sanchez, secretary Sara Harrison, and treasurer Maria Perez-Brodeur. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Chamber to host installation dinner

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will not be having a general membership meeting in January due to the Chamber hosting the installation dinner this month every year. It will be held on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2017, at Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, from 6pm to 9:30pm. There will also be an exciting silent auction with amazing prizes. Tickets are \$65/member and \$70/non-member. Reservations can be made by calling (670) 234-7150. (PR)

Water outage in As Lito, Fina Sisu, As Perdido, parts of Koblerville

There will be a temporary water service interruption today, Jan. 5, 2017, from 8am to 5pm. The purpose of the interruption is to install a new fire hydrant by the Nutrition Assistance Program building in As Lito. Affected areas are the villages alongside Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road in As Lito, Fina Sisu, As Perdido, and portions of Koblerville. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the affected areas should expect water services to be restored soon after 5pm.

Due to the location of the repair, motorists are advised to take alternative routes and proceed with caution for the safety of CUC's men and

women at the jobsite. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282). (CUC)

NMC closed this morning

Northern Marianas College employees will be participating in an on-campus professional development activity today, Jan. 5, 2017, from 8am to 12pm. All NMC offices will be closed during this period to ensure maximum employee participation. Offices will reopen in the afternoon. For any campus emergency, contact NMC Security at 237-6800. For more information about upcoming events, visit www.marianas.edu. (NMC)

'Marianas-chan' application deadline extended to Jan. 6

The Marianas Visitors Authority's "Marianas-chan" (Marianas child) application deadline has been extended until 12pm, Jan. 6, 2017. Applicants must be 4-6 years old, reside in the Northern Mariana Islands and be a U.S. citizen. Interested contestants from Tinian and Rota are invited to submit an application with a 1-2 minute video of the contestant to info@mymarianas.com for call back to the Jan. 7, 2016, audition on Saipan. Applications are available at www.mymarianas.com. (MVA)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU), accompanied by her daughter Deborah Bordallo, takes the oath of office from Speaker Paul Ryan.

Magnitude 7.2 quake hits near Fiji; tsunami alert issued

NADI, Fiji (AP)—Authorities say a magnitude 7.2 earthquake hit near the Fiji Islands, causing a tsunami warning for parts of the Pacific Ocean.

The U.S. Geological Survey says the earthquake hit a part of the ocean about 227 kilometers southwest of Nadi. The agency says the quake is 10 kilometers deep.

Radio New Zealand reports that people have been evacuating Nadi since the earthquake.

Nadi, on Fiji's main island, is a city of about 42,000 and a hub for tourism.

The agency says a tsunami warning has been issued for parts of the Pacific located within 300 kilometers of the quake. But no such warning has been issued for the Hawaiian Islands.

A 2004 quake and tsunami killed a total of 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Aceh, Indonesia.

Lunar New Year at the Hyatt

Step into the new year of 2017 with your best foot forward and join us as we celebrate the Lunar New Year and the International Day of Italian Cuisine. Savor in the exquisite taste of Shanghai as guest chef Tim Zhu from Hyatt Regency Shanghai Wujiaochang prepares traditional Chinese delicacies in celebration of the Year of the Rooster. The culinary team at Hyatt Regency Saipan is proud to work alongside Zhu, whose culinary experience spans over 20 years. The Lunar New Year dinner buffet extravaganza will be held for three nights only, commencing Thursday, Jan. 26, to Saturday, Jan. 28, from 6pm to 9pm at Kili Café & Terrace.

The price is \$55 per head; \$35 for Club at the Hyatt members. Reservations are highly recommended. Call 234-1234 Ext. 26

Giovanni's

Join us in celebrating the 10th edition of International Day of Italian Cuisine from Jan. 17 to

Jan. 31. This year the featured IDIC dish is Pizza Margherita made with original Italian dough, fresh mozzarella, and basil from our herb garden. Price is \$20, inclusive of a glass of Chianti.

i Saguá Spa

Indulge in the winter-inspired array of treatments designed to balance the senses and the body. For information and reservations, call 234-1234 Ext 35 or 323-5888 or email: spnrs.isagua@hyatt.com. Valid until Feb. 28, 2017.

Camp Hyatt

Camp Hyatt is an activity program exclusively for guests ages 4-12. Campers will spend their days doing arts and crafts, frolicking on the beach, in the pool and all over the resort with a specific theme designed for complete fun. Advanced registration is required. For rates and registration, contact Club Elán at 234-1234 Ext. 25 or email spnrs.clubelan@hyatt.com. (Hyatt)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 5, 2000

Telecom Bill clears house

After being shelved for nearly three years, the proposed regulatory body for the telecommunications sector in the CNMI passed the House of Representatives on Friday in a split vote hailed by its proponents as a step towards attracting other potential investors. Rep. Rosiky F. Camacho, author of HB 12-6 and chair of the Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee, slammed opposition to the legislation, noting that other telecom firms may be encouraged to come in and break the monopoly long held by Micronesian Telephone Corporation. Although the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation was given the mandate to regulate the telecom sector under Public Law 4-47, it has not been able to do so due to limited staff and technical expertise.

CDA to float \$60-M bond this month

The Commonwealth Development Authority is anticipating to finally float the \$60-million municipal bond by the end of the month, a development that has the promise to hasten pending major infrastructure projects and increase business activities on the island. Executive Director Marylou S. Ada said CDA's bond underwriters in the mainland United States are already in the process of obtaining the needed rating before the bond is floated in the open market. She added that CDA is hoping

to receive a word from the underwriters in the next couple of weeks in order to finally sell the \$60-million bond in the open market by the end of the month.

January 5, 2004

Opinions divided on bills empowering councils

Former senator Juan "Morgen" Tenorio and former municipal council member David Igitol have expressed opposition to two legislative initiatives granting municipal councils lawmaking authority. Tenorio believes that this would only result in additional burden for taxpayers. At the same time, he said that setting up the system such as hiring staff would cost more money. Igitol said this would only duplicate the functions of the existing local delegations—composed of local lawmakers and the municipal mayors—that tackle and address local concerns in aid of legislation. Igitol reportedly said it should be "one way or the other."

Every ordinance enacted by the council shall be signed by the presiding officer of the council and submitted to the mayor. It becomes a law upon the signing of the mayor.

Villagomez commends DPW

House vice speaker Timothy P. Villagomez has commended the Department of Public Works for finally repairing the Tun Herman Pan Road leading up to the Saipan International Airport. Back in March this year, Villagomez had written to DPW Secretary Juan S. Reyes urging him to repair the Airport Road for safety reasons. The lawmaker's letter was prompted by numerous calls to his office about the deplorable road conditions in the area. Villagomez's Precinct 1 constituents had long been complaining of dangerous potholes that could damage vehicles and lead to automobile accidents.

January 5, 2005

Power privatization fast-tracked

A new independent power producer is expected to take over the Lower Base power plant by as early as next month, well ahead of the October 2005 target set earlier for the privatization project. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. chair Francisco Q. Guerrero noted that Harris Group, CUC's consultant for the power plant privatization, had aimed to have a contract signed with an IPP by Oct. 1, 2005.

However, Guerrero said, a contract might be awarded earlier than this, with only two companies now left to choose from. The two remaining proposers are Telesource CNMI and Rolls Royce Power Ventures. Further, the winning contractor would also be asked to consider burning heavy fuel rather than more expensive diesel, which is currently used at the CUC power plants.

Teachers without PRAXIS become 'subs'

Teachers whose contracts will expire after Aug. 5, 2005 will still be hired even if they have not taken and passed the PRAXIS test, albeit only as "substitute" teachers. Public School System associate commissioner David M. Borja disclosed this new policy during the monthly Board of Education meeting last week.

Borja said the board made a policy that PRAXIS is compulsory and if the contract ends before August 2005, they would be renewed for one year but only as a substitute teacher. If their contracts end after August 2005, Borja said they would be rehired until they pass PRAXIS 1 and 2. The board is giving CNMI public schools teachers until August 2006, otherwise, their contract will not be renewed even as substitute teachers.

Through a partnership with the Civil Service Commission and the CNMI Office of Personnel Management, Northern Marianas College hosted a "Climb Higher Seminar" for about

NMC hosts Climb Higher summit

200 government employees. The purpose of the event was to provide

participants with information about professional development opportu-

nities, college admissions financial aid, NMC Prior Learning Assess-

ment program, and other information. The seminar was made possible through the support of the U.S. Department of Education's AANA-PISI program. **(PR)**



Felicitas "Tee" Abraham, vice chairperson for the Civil Service Commissioner, offered seminar participants advice about moving up the organizational ladder.



Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez opened up the seminar by encouraging the participants to take advantage of the programs and services offered at NMC.



Galvin Guerrero, president of Mt. Carmel School, who is also an adviser for NMC's Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program, provided participants details about the PLA program.



Superior Court Associate Judge Terea Kim-Tenorio shared her college experience with participants during a segment that allowed for a question and answer interaction.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Participants of NMC's Climb Higher Seminar were provided with information about NMC's programs and other tools for their professional development.



Seminar participants give the thumbs up during one of the seminar breaks.



About 200 participants of NMC's Climb Higher Seminar included employees from the Department of Public Safety, Department of Corrections, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Department of Fire and Emergency Management Services, Office of the Governor, and other public agencies.

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Ebola breakthrough: International collaboration yields a vaccine

Ebola, the disease that caused an international scare two years ago, may be on the ropes. A recent study led by the World Health Organization showed a new vaccine to be “highly effective” against the fatal disease, proving that even the most stubborn public health problems can be solved when the world’s best minds work together.

First identified in 1976 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ebola is spread through animal-to-human or human-to-human contact or through exposure to contaminated items such as linens or syringes. Sporadic outbreaks over the years culminated with an epidemic that began in 2014, killing more than 11,000 in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Another 15 people, including one in the United States, were killed as the disease radiated from the three hot spots.

As the scare intensified, hospitals across America rushed to prepare for it by checking their supplies of masks and other personal protection equipment and by quizzing patients with flu-like symptoms about recent travel outside the U.S. A nurse, Kaci Hickox, made headlines when she was quarantined against her will by New Jersey officials after returning from a humanitarian trip to Sierra Leone. She has sued the state, alleging violations of her constitutional rights.

World health experts, including those from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pooled resources in the search for a vaccine. The breakthrough was reported Dec. 23 by the WHO and various partners, who in 2015 began testing a vaccine in a part of Guinea still experiencing Ebola cases. The vaccine, administered to 5,837 people who were exposed in some manner to the disease, showed 100 percent effectiveness.

Some questions about the vaccine’s effectiveness, such as whether it works long-term, remain. However, the vaccine represents an amazing step forward against a disease that has had its way with humanity for 40 years.

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Voters ready for Trump to make good on promises

What do the voters who elected Donald Trump want him to deliver?

“Jobs,” said Marianne Zarlinga, an electrologist from North Royalton, Ohio, who voted for Trump in November. “Bringing jobs back for America.”

“He’s going to be just awesome for that,” chimed in Melinda Berger, a homemaker from nearby North Ridgeville. “I can’t wait!”

“He has to improve the health care,” she added. “Thousands of dollars out of pocket before you get any benefits — who can afford that?”

“Economy and health care,” Zarlinga agreed.

Berger and Zarlinga, two 50-something white women from the Cleveland suburbs, were among the voters who helped Trump win the swing state of Ohio by 8 points.

They were among a dozen Trump voters convened last month for a discussion conducted by pollster Peter Hart for the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg Public Policy Center.

Their priorities for the new administration quickly winnowed down to three: jobs, health care and “drain the swamp,” Trump’s promise that he will change the way Washington works.

That’s what his voters heard Trump promise; now, they said, they intend to hold him to it.

“Deliver,” Zarlinga said crisply when asked for her message to the president-elect.

That adds up to a tall order for Trump, but it’s only fair. During the campaign, he promised that he would “bring back” millions of jobs, enact a “beautiful” health-care plan, and end gridlock in Washington.

“People are looking for results,” Republican pollster David Winston told me. “Voters showed that they were willing to rock the boat in order to get change. If they don’t get change, they’ll be willing to rock the boat again.”

Job growth may be the easiest part. In a slowly recovering economy, that’s happening already; more than two million jobs have been created this year.

And Trump will surely take credit; in fact he already has. When Carrier said it would keep some 800 jobs in Indiana, Trump claimed it was all thanks to him. (He neglected to mention that the company is still sending about 1,300 jobs to Mexico). Last week, he announced that Sprint plans to create 5,000 jobs in the United States this year, including some call center jobs relocated from overseas. (That’s the result of a pre-existing investment deal, not the president-elect.)

Despite the sketchy details, these developments have already given Trump a modest bounce in several polls. “He showed that

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com



he has his eye on the ball,” Winston said.

Health care will be harder.

“It affects every person in the U.S.,” said Eric Viersulz, a maintenance worker from Lorain County. “If he doesn’t do anything about the system, if it isn’t more affordable,” that will make people “angry,” he said.

Polls show that most Trump voters don’t want Obamacare repealed without a workable replacement. (It wasn’t clear whether any of the voters in the group obtained health insurance through Obamacare. Most adults under 65 get health insurance through their jobs.) In a Kaiser Family Foundation Poll after the election, only 15 percent of Trump voters said they wanted the law repealed without anything in its place. Most said they either wanted the law to be “replaced with a Republican alternative” or merely “scaled back.”

But Republicans in Congress don’t have an Obamacare replacement ready. And if Trump can’t find a way to bring everyone’s health costs down — a goal for which he has offered no clear strategy — many will be disappointed and angry.

As for draining the swamp, Trump has left that ambition mostly undefined. He’s promised not to employ lobbyists in his administration, but lobbyists have been able to join his transition merely by cancelling their registrations.

Asked what “drain the swamp” meant to them, the Ohio voters talked about corruption.

“Eliminate corrupt politicians and wasteful programs,” offered Kevin Koehler, a deputy sheriff from Lorain County.

Asked if they were worried about billionaires in the Cabinet or business conflicts of interest on Trump’s part, they shrugged.

“He already has his wealth,” Berger said. “He doesn’t need to profit off anybody or anything.” Others nodded.

More important, they said, was that Trump be allowed to use his business acumen to end gridlock.

“It’s his job to make it work,” said Michael Rotella, an engi-

See VOTERS on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

What to watch for in 2017

At the beginning of each new year, I usually write about the foreign policy issues the president will confront in the next 12 months.

But 2017 won't be a normal political year — just as 2016 was a stunner. So it isn't enough to forecast the fate of the Islamic State, or the rise of China, or the next Mideast conflict. This year's dominant theme will be something much more existential: the fate of Western liberal democratic systems as we have known them since World War II.

The cracks in Western democracies have been widening for years as economic inequality has risen and factory jobs shifted abroad or to computers.

But it took the Brexit vote in Britain and the victory of Donald Trump to lay bare a level of public fear and discontent that goes beyond the economic. Those unhappy with the pace of change, or on the losing end of globalization — and even some who've done well — are seeking leaders who promise to roll back the clock.

That provides fertile terrain for rabble rousers who offer voters a list of enemies — migrants, Muslims, international (Jewish) bankers — to blame for everything that has gone wrong. Social media magnifies their message and facts have become irrelevant. Conspiracy theories are in.

So last year was a great one for demagogues in democratic countries. This year could be worse.

The 2016 crop starred Britain's Nigel Farage, leader of the Brexiters (and pal of Trump) who campaigned for Britain to

leave the European Union, and demonized Muslims. The British demagogue has started a domino process that could lead to the end of the European Union, which, for all its flaws, has kept the peace in Europe since World War II.

Of course, the victory of Trump — who endorsed Brexit and has hosted Farage at Trump Tower — has more far-reaching implications for democracies in the West.

Trump's win reflects the bitterly political polarization that has paralyzed Congress. The president-elect has encouraged his followers to regard political opponents as the enemy, and has demonized minorities and Muslims. Such extreme polarization makes it almost impossible for a democracy to function.

The United States was once viewed abroad by friend and foe alike as the exemplar of democratic institutions. But as I've traveled abroad, in Europe, the Mideast, and China, I have repeatedly heard the same kinds of questions from ordinary people: What has happened to American democracy? How did it collapse?

If the U.S. democracy is no longer seen as a role model, indeed is viewed as a failure, this raises questions worldwide about the efficacy of democracy as a system.

Such questions are fodder for the propaganda of Russia and China, both of which are trying to promote an alternative governing model: one in which a strongman and a single party control the system. Such a system may or may not permit a cosmetic veneer of democratic institutions.

Already, illiberal democracy is making headway in Europe, as Hungary and Poland move closer toward this model. Austria

By **TRUDY RUBIN**

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.



came close to electing a neo-fascist president. Meantime, Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan, now working closely with Vladimir Putin, has turned his country's once flourishing democracy into a virtual police state. Russia, for its part, is encouraging populist parties and demagogues across Europe, offering reams of publicity and cash, and no doubt secret cyber-assistance.

So what should you look for in 2017 to measure how democracy is faring in the West?

One key will be the results of April-May presidential elections in France, where Trump's win may have boosted the chances of right-wing nationalist Marine Le Pen, who wants France to leave the European Union. Were that to happen, the EU would collapse.

A second key factor will be how well the party of Germany's Angela Merkel does in parliamentary elections, which must be held by October. The widely admired Merkel has rightly been billed as "the last man" (or last strong leader) still standing in Europe, and the last firm defender of liberal democracy. But she has lost popularity since letting 1 million refugees into Germany in 2016, in large part because she considered it her country's moral duty.

The most important factor, however, will be the governing choices made by Donald Trump.

The president-elect has made clear he has little interest in the network of the post-WWII international political and economic institutions that America created and led for decades. No doubt they need overhaul, but if they crumble, the vacuum will be filled by others, notably China and Russia.

Moscow will also be trying to expand its geographical sphere of influence. It will be greatly emboldened if NATO and the European Union crumble. But neither prospect seems to dismay Trump, who finds Putin praiseworthy and may dream of real estate deals in Moscow.

The key to Western democracy's fate in 2017 will be whether, once in office, the president-elect moves to strengthen alliances with democracies in Europe and Asia. If he retreats to the America First stance he embraced in the election, and prefers to pal with Putin rather than Merkel, Western democracy will be in even deeper trouble.

So in 2017 watch whether President Trump chooses to defend democratic principles abroad (and at home) or whether he finds such principles irrelevant — and prefers to focus solely on the art of the deal.

The Consumer Caution Corner: Buying a car

By **MICHAEL J. CYGANEK**
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season. This week, the Office of the Attorney General's "Consumer Caution Corner" sets out good practices to follow when buying a used car:

What should I do before I start shopping for a car?

1) Decide what kind of car you need and how you will use it. Ask yourself:

- a. Do I buy a new or used car?
- b. How many passengers will usually ride in the car?
- c. Do I need extra space to carry bags, tools and other things?
- 2)** Decide how much you can pay for a car. Think about:
 - a. The cost to register the car
 - b. Car insurance and whether a warranty is included
 - c. Gas
 - d. Maintenance costs
- 3)** Decide how you will pay for the car. You might decide to borrow money. Compare offers from several lenders. Ask the lender to pre-approve your loan.

How do I avoid a problem with dealer financing?

- 1)** Ask the dealer if your deal is final. If it is, make sure the deal is written in the contract.
- 2)** If the deal is NOT final, the terms of your financing could change.

- a. The dealer will not sell your trade-in vehicle before the financing is approved
- Get a written promise that:
- b. The dealer will return your down payment if the financing is not approved

- 3)** Remember: If the dealer offers you another deal, you do NOT have to accept it.
- 4)** Read the contract before you sign it. Check the financing terms. That means the annual percentage rate, length of the financing, and amount borrowed. Are they what you expected?

What if I have a problem with dealership financing?

• If you have a problem with financing you got from the dealer, report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Call the FTC at 1-877-382-4357. Tell the person on the phone what happened. You can give as much or as little information as you want. Go online: ftc.gov/complaint.

Each week, the OAG's Consumer Protection Education Program aims to provide consumers and businesses with the "know-how" to identify and protect themselves from unfair trade practices and marketplace schemes. If you would like to file a Consumer Complaint, please pick up a Form at the OAG (in Capitol Hill) and then please submit it by email to consumer_counsel@cnmioag.org.

Michael J. Cyganek is consumer counsel at the Office of the Attorney General.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Feliz Año Nuevo

I fresco na manglo i mapos na sakan man guagauife ha esta pago. Ta disesea na u sisige ha esti na frescon manglo yan i man bonito siha na sinisedi guine gi isлата siha. Hafa kumeke ilegku? Es desit i ekunumiata yan i salape ni humalum gi tanota. Esta guaha dididi salapeta para u libianu kulamten mas mauleg i fondun retirement yan i gobietnota, esta guaha chochu para unos cuantos gi taotaota, esta sige mona i ma areglan i chalan siha. Bunitu esta i chalan santatte, magpi, kumeke bunitu Obyan yan iya Naftan. Esta guaha dididi salape para i man ofisiatta, lokui. Lao guaguaha siha asunto ni man lalailai esta pago. I ma apasen i tano taotao ni ha chuli i gobietnota ya hana ma uusa, pareho ha "Right of Way" yan i chalan para usun publiku "Land Need." Uma apasi i CUC ni ma usan hanum yan elektrisidad yan i ma tulaikan i pipe yan

i tangken hanum siha. U ma nai i CHCC (hospital) salape mas para mediko (physicians), infitmera (nurses), ayudante (administrative staff and medical lab tech.), medical referral, yan public health specialists. Rechasa i nisisidad i Public Works lokue yan uma nae ayudon salape. Bula magahet nisisidadta ya ti klaro kau nahong i salapeta ni humahalum (revenue) para u kinibri esti siha na nisisidad. Man chatsaga hit magahit, lau ta usuni ya tana mauleg mona mas i linalata yan i gobietnota. Responsabilidad i man magasta na uma atan esti siha na nisisidad ya ufan ma falagui ya u ma reskata. Ayuda i kuattro na municipalidad sa guaha nisisidad niha light and heavy equipments tad komo bucket truck, dump truck, long-blade chain saw, yan otro siha na makinaria ni ma nisisita. Seguro yo na mas man magof hit yangin guaha mas salapeta ya sumiña ta kumpli masea la mita gi esti siha na nisisidadta. Thank You.

Rudolfo M. Sablan
Garapan

VOTERS

From Page 10

neer from North Olmsted.

Polls of all voters — including the majority that didn't choose Trump — have found that his approval ratings are lower than any other president-elect in modern times.

A Pew Research Center poll last month found that only 41 percent of voters approve of the job Trump has been doing. Eight years ago, at the same point in Obama's transition, 72 percent of voters approved.

It's true that Trump's standing in the polls has slowly risen since the election, but that's mostly because skeptical Republicans have turned more positive. Democrats haven't warmed to him yet, although Pew found that some had revised their forecasts of his presidency from "terrible" to merely "poor."






"He's still in a challenging position," Winston said. "But he still has the same advantage every president elect has: People want him to succeed."

Indeed, in the Pew poll, most voters who supported Hillary Clinton said they were willing to give Trump a chance.

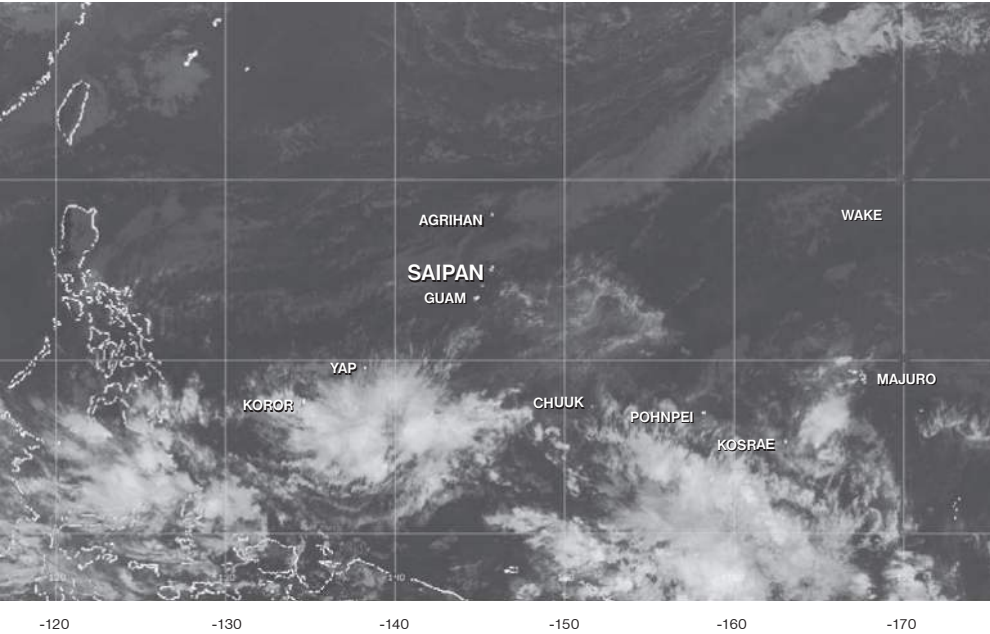
But he's on thin ice. Even among his voters, Trump's honeymoon could turn out to be short.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲89° ▼79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:13 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Andersen Air Force Base Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas waters. Winds could sink a little lower Thursday, then begin to rise again Friday night. Seas should relax a little then rise again in step with the winds. At this point a small craft advisory is not expected, however the NWP data suggests it cannot be ruled out. There are quite a few low and mid level debris clouds in the area, along with some showers. Expect it to remain isolated though.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▼ ▲		
Guam and Rota	Mostly sunny	79 / 87 °F
Palau	Mostly cloudy	79 / 85 °F
Yap	Heavy rain	80 / 85 °F
Chuuk	Mostly sunny	80 / 86 °F
Pohnpei	Mostly cloudy	79 / 82 °F
Kosrae	Partly sunny	80 / 85 °F
Majuro	Partly cloudy	81 / 84 °F

AROUND THE GLOBE ▼ ▲		
Auckland	Mostly sunny	56 / 68 °F
Beijing	Morning clouds	25 / 37 °F
Hong Kong	Partly cloudy	66 / 74 °F
Honolulu	Mostly sunny	64 / 76 °F
London	Partly cloudy	32 / 42 °F
Los Angeles	Light showers	49 / 61 °F
Manila	Partly sunny	77 / 88 °F
Melbourne	Cloudy	64 / 85 °F
Miami	Partly sunny	65 / 79 °F
New York	Morning clouds	38 / 51 °F
Osaka	Mostly sunny	37 / 47 °F
Paris	Partly sunny	33 / 44 °F
Pusan	Mostly sunny	40 / 55 °F
Rome	Mostly sunny	36 / 48 °F
Salem	Sunny	17 / 30 °F
San Francisco	Partly sunny	43 / 52 °F
Seoul	Morning clouds	22 / 48 °F
Tokyo	Mostly sunny	37 / 48 °F
Washington, DC	Cloudy	31 / 38 °F



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PAPA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		
6:14 AM	LOW TIDE	0.22 Feet
1:05 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.96 Feet
7:46 PM	LOW TIDE	0.73 Feet
-	-	-

	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM

	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	11:42 AM	-	-
Friday	-	12:08 AM	12:27 PM
Saturday	-	1:04 AM	1:14 PM
Sunday	-	2:02 AM	2:04 PM
Monday	-	3:02 AM	2:57 PM

NEWS DESK

For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 5, 2016

DEPARTURES			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL297	4:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	2:10pm	6:05pm	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)			
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ626/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	8:55am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
PR1572	5:45am	7:45am	7, 4
UA6391/183	1:30pm	8:50pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/183	1:30pm	9:10pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/193	1:30pm	10:35pm	5 via Rota-GUM-ROR
UA6390/183	2:20pm	8:50pm	2 via GUM
UA6390/183	2:20pm	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA6390/193	2:20pm	10:35pm	2 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6391/159	1:30pm	9:55pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA6390/159	2:20pm	9:55pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
LJ651	7:30am	1:10pm	Daily
7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:05pm	1:55am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR1571	10:25pm	4:45am+1	3, 6
UA192/6395	9:45pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/6395	10:25pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/6395	11:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UA116/6395	9:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju Air; HX: Hong Kong Airlines; LJ: Jin Air; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure;ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily			
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	SAIPAN TO TINIAN			SAIPAN TO ROTA		
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily			
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily	4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily	ROTA TO SAIPAN		
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily	12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily			
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily	4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily			
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily			
			5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily			

Business

Auto industry's relationship with Trump takes dramatic turn

FLAT ROCK, Mich. (AP)—The auto industry's relationship with President-elect Donald Trump took a dramatic turn Tuesday as Ford Motor Co. decided to shift investment dollars targeted for Mexico to the U.S., while Trump threatened General Motors with a tax on some imported small cars.

Ford is canceling plans to build a new \$1.6 billion factory in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, and will instead invest some of that money in a U.S. factory that will build new electric and autonomous vehicles.

Ford said last spring it would move production of the Ford Focus small car to the new plant from Michigan. Trump repeatedly criticized the plan, and Ford was among the companies he threatened to hit with a 35 percent tariff on products made in Mexico and exported to the U.S.

Trump added General Motors to that group Tuesday, saying in a tweet that the Cruze small cars GM makes

in Mexico and sends to U.S. dealers could face “a big border tax!”

Ford CEO Mark Fields said Tuesday that market forces dictated Ford's decision not to build the San Luis Potosi plant. Low gas prices and low interest rates have been hampering small-car sales. U.S. sales of the Focus were down 17 percent through November; by contrast, sales of Ford's biggest SUV, the Expedition, were up 46 percent.

Ford will still move production of the Focus to Mexico, but it will go to an existing plant in Hermosillo that makes midsize cars. Ford will hire around 200 workers in Hermosillo to expand production there. The Wayne, Michigan, plant that currently makes the Focus will get two new products next year, preserving jobs at the facility.

Fields said Ford will invest \$700 million in the Flat Rock plant to make hybrid, electric and autonomous vehicles. It will also hire around 700 workers starting in 2018. In



Flat Rock Assembly employees clap as Ford President and CEO Mark Fields addresses the auto plant, Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017, in Flat Rock, Mich.

announcing the Michigan expansion, Fields noted Trump's promise to make the U.S. more competitive by lowering taxes and easing regulations.

“This is a vote of confidence for President-elect Trump and some of the policies he may be pursuing,” Fields said at the

company's plant in Flat Rock.

Workers lined up on the factory floor cheered the news. United Auto Workers Vice President Jimmy Settles, the union's chief negotiator for Ford, told workers he cried when he heard about the investment. Flat Rock,

which employs around 3,200 people, was threatened with closure during the recession. More recently, it has seen temporary layoffs because of slowing sales of one of its products, the Ford Mustang. The plant also makes the Lincoln Continental.

FAA, airline investigating how worker got left in cargo hold

Federal authorities and airline officials are investigating the odd flight of baggage handler who wound up in the cargo hold of a plane for more than 300 miles.

The Federal Aviation Administration said it hoped to talk to the man on Tuesday. The agency said it would determine whether the man's cargo-loading company followed proper procedures to make sure that all employees were out of the cargo hold before the doors were closed and the plane took off.

The man was found unharmed after the United Express flight from Charlotte, North Carolina, landed Sunday at Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C.

cording to the FlightAware tracking service.

The plane was operated for United by Mesa Airlines, but the bag handler works for a Mesa contractor, G2 Secure Staff, Benson said.

G2, which is based in Irving, Texas, issued a statement saying that its employee traveled in the cargo hold “on accident” and that it is cooperating with investigations into the incident.

Phoenix-based Mesa did not immediately respond to phone and email messages.

Rob Yingling, a spokesman for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, said that medics met the plane when it arrived Sunday afternoon but determined the baggage handler did not need treatment.

Beantown as Shoetown: Sneaker makers stake claim in Boston

BOSTON (AP)—Shoe makers are racing to the Boston area as they compete for millennial talent.

Reebok picked the city's rapidly growing Seaport District for its new global headquarters in December, following in the footsteps of New Balance and Converse, both of which opened splashy new headquarters in 2015 that helped redefine the city skyline.

Just outside the city limits, Wolverine World Wide Inc.—the Rockford, Michigan-based owners of Saucony, Keds, Sper-

ry and other brands—opened a regional campus in Waltham for 370 workers this summer after moving it south from Lexington, Massachusetts.

And the Rockport Co., purveyor of casual and dress shoes, is slated to christen a new headquarters for 212 employees in the affluent Boston suburb of Newton later in January. The company was sold in 2015 by Adidas AG, the German sportswear giant that still owns Reebok International Ltd., to a standalone company formed by New Bal-

ance Holdings Inc. and a private equity firm.

The new locales recognize that younger, more skilled workers prefer to be closer to the amenities cities and their neighboring communities provide, such as better transit, more restaurants and greater cultural options, over more distant suburbs, industry watchers say.

“These companies cluster because they're primarily looking for talent. You want to be where the people are,” said Matthew Powell, a

sports industry analyst for the NPD Group, a New York-based market research firm.

“They're also trying to stay close to their consumer. Millennials are clustering in large cities, so it's a great way to be plugged into where your consumer is.”

The moves also affirm New England—historically the nation's footwear-making region—remains a viable center of the industry, said Nate Herman, a senior vice president at the American Apparel & Footwear Association trade group.

Cruise company Carnival gets personal with concierge tech

LAS VEGAS (AP)—What if your room on a cruise ship were to unlock automatically as you approach, or if the wait staff could bring your favorite cocktail before you even ask?

Carnival Corp., the operator of such cruise lines as Princess, Holland America and Carnival, wants to make that happen so it can get cozier with its guests and make cruises even more personalized.

Carnival is using the CES

gadget show in Las Vegas on Wednesday to unveil new concierge technology designed to help crew members anticipate and respond to passengers' needs. It will rely on sensors and wearable trackers, and is scheduled to debut on the Regal Princess cruise ship in November.

The leisure-cruise industry is playing catch-up with travel peers like hotels and airlines, which now let you unlock rooms with a smart-

watch or fly with a boarding pass on your phone.

Personalization is important as cruise ships get bigger and come across as impersonal, said Mike Driscoll, editor-in-chief of Cruise Week, an industry publication. Personalization can also help cruise companies attract more first-timers, including tech-savvy millennials.

“It's catching up to what life is like on the land,”

Driscoll said.

Whether anticipating guests' needs will feel useful or creepy remains to be seen. Those who might be spooked don't have to use the medallion or can limit how much they want to participate, Carnival CEO Arnold Donald said.

“In the end, the guests will tell us,” Donald told The Associated Press. “If it doesn't (resonate), it's back to the drawing board.”

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Nation

Retreating after Trump tweet, GOP won't gut ethics office

WASHINGTON (AP)—The new GOP era in Washington got off to a messy start Tuesday as House Republicans, under pressure from President-elect Donald Trump, abruptly dropped plans to gut an independent congressional ethics board.

The dizzying about-face came as lawmakers convened for the first day of the 115th Congress, an occasion normally reserved for pomp and ceremony under the Capitol Dome. Instead, House Republicans found themselves under attack not only from Democrats but from their new president, over their secretive move Monday to neuter the independent Office of Congressional Ethics and place it under lawmakers' control.

GOP leaders scrambled to contain the damage, and within hours of Trump registering his criticism on Twitter, they called an emergency meeting where House Republicans voted without opposition to undo the change.

The episode, coming even before the new Congress was convened and lawmakers were sworn in, was a powerful illustration of the sway Trump



Rep. Louie Gohmert, R-Texas, left, talks with Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017, as the 115th Congress gets underway.

may hold over his party in a Washington that will be fully under Republican control for the first time in a decade. GOP lawmakers who've felt unfairly targeted by the ethics office had defied their own leaders with their initial vote to neuter the body, but once Trump weighed in they backpedaled immediately.

"With all that Congress has to work on, do they really have to make the weakening of the Independent Ethics Watchdog, as unfair as it may be, their number one act and priority," Trump had asked over Twitter Tuesday morning, in an objection that appeared focused more on timing than on substance. Trump,

who will take office in a little over two weeks, said the focus should be on tax reform and health care, and he included the hash-tag #DTS, for "Drain the Swamp," his oft-repeated campaign promise to bring change to Washington.

Democrats and even many Republicans were quick to point out that the lawmak-

ers' plans for their ethics watchdog flew in the face of that notion. The measure was part of a GOP-written rules package that looked like it could fail after Trump registered his objections amid a public outcry from good government activists. The stripped-down package was approved late Tuesday by the House, 234-193.

"We were elected on a promise to drain the swamp, and starting the session by relaxing ethics rules is a very bad start," said GOP Rep. Tom McClintock of California.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy mentioned Trump's opposition in the emergency meeting, and some lawmakers said it had a powerful effect.

"I do believe when President-elect Trump tweeted

out...members got calls," said Rep. Lou Barletta, R-Pa. Trump spoke by phone with House Speaker Paul Ryan on Tuesday after the ethics change was dropped.

The Office of Congressional Ethics was created in 2008 after several bribery and corruption cases in the House, but lawmakers of both parties have groused about the way it operates.

Lawmakers were especially incensed by an investigation of members of Congress from both parties who went on a 2013 trip to Azerbaijan paid for by that country's government. Lawmakers said after the investigation was made public in 2015 that they had no idea the trip was paid for by the government, and the House Ethics Committee ultimately cleared them.

ACROSS THE NATION

Bill and Hillary Clinton to attend Trump inauguration

WASHINGTON (AP)—Falling in line with tradition, Bill and Hillary Clinton plan to attend Donald Trump's inauguration. It's a decision that will put Hillary Clinton on the inaugural platform as her bitter rival from the 2016 campaign assumes the office she long sought. The Clintons announced their decision to attend the Jan. 20 inauguration shortly after former President George W. Bush's office said Tuesday he would attend along with former first lady Laura Bush. The Bushes are "pleased to be able to witness the peaceful transfer of power—a hallmark of American democracy—and swearing-in of President Trump and Vice President Pence," Bush's office said in a statement. It is traditional for former presidents and their spouses to attend the inauguration.

who would otherwise go free. The appeals court sent the case back to the lower court. Seven offenders are currently free on provisional releases from the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, and only one has been permanently discharged, even though the program is more than 20 years old. That led U.S. District Judge Donovan Frank in 2015 to declare the program unconstitutional and order changes to make it easier for people to get on a pathway for release. As of Tuesday, 721 people were being held under the program.

Search for Ohio plane that vanished will last until recovery

CLEVELAND (AP)—Cleveland officials say the search for a plane carrying six people that disappeared last week over Lake Erie will continue until the aircraft is found. Officials said more debris that possibly came from the plane was found Tuesday on the shoreline. They have said many of more than 120 pieces of debris found are consistent with that type of aircraft and a bag from the plane was found. Tuesday was the third consecutive day that weather conditions allowed searchers to look for the Columbus-bound Cessna 525 Citation that vanished shortly after takeoff Thursday night from Burke Lakefront Airport. Officials say the search area covers about 12 square miles. A business executive was piloting the plane carrying his wife, two sons and two neighbors, including a University of Wisconsin-Madison student.

Trump questions US intelligence as governing challenges loom

NEW YORK (AP)—His inauguration less than three weeks away, President-elect Donald Trump on Tuesday raised new doubts about the nation's intelligence community, tweeting fresh criticism at the same officials who will help inform his most sensitive decisions once he takes office.

Trump charged on Twitter without evidence that the timing of an upcoming intelligence briefing on Russian interference in the 2016 election had been delayed. "Perhaps more time needed to build a case. Very strange!" he wrote, using quote marks around the

word "intelligence."

Trump's jab, in line with repeated criticism of his nation's intelligence leaders, sparked confusion among intelligence officials, who said there was no delay in the briefing schedule.

The fresh clash came as Trump took further steps to fill his Cabinet and key White House positions, with his attention shifting toward the challenges of governing.

Earlier Tuesday, he tapped as U.S. trade representative a former Reagan official who has condemned Republicans' commitment to free trade. Trump indicated that Robert

Lighthizer, who is expected to take a hard line against China, would represent "the United States as we fight for good trade deals that put the American worker first."

The new administration's specific plans for crafting new trade deals, spokesman Sean Spicer said, "will come in time."

There were also questions about Trump's plans for repealing President Barack Obama's signature health care law, a move that could strip health insurance from millions of Americans. The issue was expected to be the focus

as Vice President-elect Mike Pence and secretary of state pick Rex Tillerson meet with top Republicans on Capitol Hill on Wednesday.

Pence issued a direct challenge to Washington Republicans Tuesday: "The president-elect has a very clear message to Capitol Hill. And that is, it's time to get to work."

Trump signaled he would not bless all of the GOP's priorities on Capitol Hill, openly questioning the timing of the House Republican push to gut an independent ethics board just as the new Congress gathered.

Police investigating accidental poisoning that killed 4 kids

DALLAS (AP)—A criminal investigation is underway into an apparent accidental poisoning involving a professional-grade pesticide that left four children dead and an Amarillo woman in critical condition, police said Tuesday.

Authorities are looking into why the family had the pesticide pellets, called Weevilicide, which is only supposed to be sold to people with professional licenses or certification. The product's manual, available online, outlines stringent guidelines for using the product including having two trained individuals apply it. Figures from the American

Association of Poison Control Centers show that deaths from the pesticide are rare.

The father of the children who died told first responders through a Spanish language interpreter that he had spread the pellets under the family's mobile home after obtaining the product from a friend, Amarillo Fire Capt. Larry Davis said. Davis said the product is not available for sale to the general public. The product's manual says it's intended for use in pest control in commercial transport or storage of commodities and animal feed.

Davis said the father does not have professional certi-

fication as far as he knows. He did not know whether the friend who gave him the product had a certification.

Amarillo police spokesman Officer Jeb Hilton says the department's special crimes unit is investigating because of the child deaths. Once completed, the investigation will be turned over to the district attorney to determine whether charges will be filed. Hilton said other federal and state environmental regulation agencies may also investigate the use and storage of the chemical.

Fire officials identified the children who died as 7-year-old Felipe Balderas,

9-year-old Johnnie Balderas, 11-year-old Josue Balderas and 17-year-old Yasmien Balderas. Officials have said all four children lived at the home in Amarillo, which is about 350 miles northwest of Dallas.

The children's mother, Martha Balderas, 45, was in critical condition Tuesday at University Medical Center in Lubbock, according to a hospital spokesman. Five other family members, including the father and four other children, were being treated at BSA Health System in Amarillo and were in stable condition, hospital and fire officials said early Tuesday.

Asia

Russia eyes naval drills with PH as 2 ships visit

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Russia is eyeing naval exercises with the Philippines and deployed two navy ships for a goodwill visit to Manila on Tuesday as Moscow moves to expand defense ties with a Filipino president known for being hostile to the U.S.

Rear Adm. Eduard Mikhailov, deputy commander of Russia's Pacific Fleet, led the five-day visit of vessels including an anti-submarine ship and showcased what his country can offer to a Southeast Asian nation that's long been a staunch American treaty ally.

"You can choose ... to cooperate with United States of America or to cooperate with Russia," Mikhailov told reporters through an interpreter at the Manila harbor after a welcoming ceremony. "But from our side we can help you in every way that you need."

"We are sure that in the future we'll have exercises with

you. Maybe, just maneuvering or maybe use of combat systems and so on," he said.

The anti-submarine ship Admiral Tributs and sea tanker Boris Butoma have a wide range of combat features. Filipinos will be allowed to tour the huge ships and Russian marines will demonstrate their combat capability during the high-profile visit, according to the Philippine navy.

With an underfunded and underequipped military, the Philippines has struggled to deal with attacks by ransom-seeking Abu Sayyaf militants and allied gunmen, who have kidnapped crewmen of tugboats and ships from neighboring Malaysia and Indonesia in the Sulu Sea and outlying waters.

Russia can help through future combat drills, Mikhailov said. "We have an experience in fighting these (threats)," he said. "We will share to you our knowledge

on these problems, how to solve piracy and terrorism."

After Russian and Philippine officials met in Manila in August, the two countries began drafting a proposed defense cooperation accord that could be signed during a planned visit by President Rodrigo Duterte to Russia in April.

The visit by the Russian navy ships is the third to the Philippines and the first under Duterte, who took office in June. Duterte has lashed out at outgoing President Barack Obama and his administration for criticizing Duterte's deadly crackdown on illegal drugs which is feared to have left more than 6,000 suspected drug users and dealers.

Contrastingly, Duterte has reached out to China and Russia—whose leaders he has met recently—in a dramatic shift in Philippine foreign policy that has put Washington in a dilemma.

thing concrete, and we will give you back something concrete," she said.

Most journalists and aid workers, however, have been blocked from the area of Rakhine where abuses have been alleged.

Myat Thu, a former political prisoner and chairman of the Yangon School of Political Science, said the incident "undermines the government position a lot." Asked whether he thought the video represented an isolated case, he said sarcastically, "I will say there are so many 'isolated incidents' in Rakhine state."

The police were taking part in a search for militants from a fledgling insurgent group that says it is fighting for the rights of the stateless Muslim minority, who lack Myanmar citizenship though Rohingya have lived in the country for generations.

row for insulting Islam. Human rights activist Shan Taseer called on Twitter this week called for supporters to pray for Asia Bibi, who has been on death row for years. His call drew a strong reaction from Islamists who have been rallying in the eastern city of Lahore to demand action against him. His father Salman Taseer was governor of Punjab province and provoked the anger of Islamists for also supporting Bibi. He was killed in January 2011 by one of his own bodyguards.

to social media Dec. 31 but recorded Nov. 5 in a village called Kotankauk in the north of Rakhine, a state in western Myanmar where most of Myanmar's more than 1 million Rohingya live. It was apparently filmed by a police officer, who recorded the beating while looking impassively into the camera and smoking a cigarette.

Aye Aye Soe, a spokesperson for the foreign ministry, insisted the event "has to be an isolated case."

"You cannot just look at one incident and think, that's the whole thing that is happening."

She said that if the government is presented with facts, it will respond in kind, but that "it's sort of mixed up and confusing over there," and many allegations are difficult to verify.

"Come back with some-

plenish depleted reservoirs in dams. The unusual four-month long dry spell raised fears of a food shortage. Pakistan's agriculture sector contributes about 25 percent to the country's annual GDP.

Son of slain governor threatened for angering Islamists

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The son of a Pakistani politician killed for opposing the country's harsh blasphemy laws says he is now receiving death threats for supporting a Christian woman on death

ASIAN BRIEFS

Months-long dry spell ends in Pakistan with rain, snowfall

ISLAMABAD (AP)—A senior meteorologist says the first rain and snowfall of the winter season have come to Pakistan, ending a months-long dry spell which caused breathing problems and water shortages. Mohammad Hanif said Tuesday's drizzle in the capital, Islamabad, and elsewhere prompted many residents to rush outside and enjoy the weather. More rain and snowfall is expected this week, which will help re-

World

Silenced by IS, displaced Iraqis relish return to phones

SEWDINAN CAMP, Iraq (AP)—Iraqis who escaped Islamic State rule during the battle for Mosul are indulging in a newfound freedom—the right to check their phones.

When the Iraqi offensive to retake the northern city began in mid-October, its Islamic State rulers warned residents that anyone caught with an active mobile phone would be killed for spying.

Many destroyed their SIM cards, and at least one terrified resident flushed his phone down the toilet. Others hid their devices where the militants were unlikely to look -- under women's clothes at the bottom of a wardrobe or in bird coops on the roofs of their homes.

For many, the phones came in handy later, when they were able to phone the military to coordinate their escape. After arriving in camps for the displaced, they were able to reach out to loved ones and return to social media after a virtual two-year blackout.

Sahm Yassin, a primary school teacher, was one of those who took the risk and hid his phone. Before he fled Mosul about a week ago, he used it sparingly, walking under cover of darkness to high ground where he could get a signal strong enough to call family in Baghdad.

"We were so isolated



AP

Displaced Iraqis, who fled fighting between Iraqi security forces and Islamic State militants, wait to charge their mobile phones and electrical lanterns, the generator owner charging 500 Iraqi dinars (about 45 U.S. cents) to charge each mobile phone, at Sewdinan Camp for the displaced near Khazer, Iraq on Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017.

from the outside world, but I still needed to let them know that we, especially my elderly mother, are OK," said Yassin. "It's a great feeling, I missed being in touch with everyone," he said after retrieving his phone from one of the camp's "power vendors"—displaced Iraqis with small generators who recharge phones for 500 dinars (about 45 cents). The camp does not provide electricity.

IS seized Mosul, the country's second largest city, in the summer of 2014, when the extremists swept across western and northern Iraq. Ten weeks into the offensive, the militants still hold most of the city.

On taking the city, IS im-

plemented a radical interpretation of Islamic teachings, including a ban on smoking. Men were required to grow beards and women in public had to cover themselves from head to toe.

The group initially allowed the use of mobile phones in Mosul under a set of intrusive restrictions. Militants at checkpoints and on foot patrols routinely checked people's phones, looking for suspicious numbers, music or photos, which were also banned. A few months later, the militants destroyed all the mobile towers, but residents said that on higher ground they could still pick up a weak signal from the nearby Kurdish region.

Video shows man believed to be nightclub attacker in Turkey

ISTANBUL (AP)—An eerie video emerged Tuesday of a man believed to be the attacker who killed 39 people in a mass shooting at a nightclub, showing him taking a selfie as he silently toured Istanbul's most famous square.

The camera never leaves the man's unsmiling face as he walked through Taksim Square during the 44-second clip that was broadcast on state-run Anadolu television and other Turkish media.

It wasn't immediately clear if the video was made before or after the New Year's massacre at the Reina nightclub, or how it was obtained. The gunman, who hasn't been publicly identified, is still at large.

On Monday, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack, which also wounded nearly 70 people. The extremists said a "soldier of the caliphate" had

carried out the mass shooting to avenge Turkish military operations against IS in northern Syria.

Funerals began Tuesday in Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Turkey for the dead, most of them tourists. Mourners wept for the lives that were cut short in the early hours of 2017 at the popular and glamorous club.

Thousands attended the funeral of Layan Nasser, an 18-year-old Arab Israeli dental assistant who was buried in the Israeli city of Tira.

"She had dreams to work, to progress, to study, to raise a family, but unfortunately the terror put an end to her dreams," said Tira Mayor Mamoun Abd El Hai.

Hundreds of people attended funerals for two of three Lebanese victims. One of them, 26-year-old fitness instructor Elias Wardini, was recently engaged to be married. His family and

friends set off fireworks as his white coffin arrived at a church in Beirut.

At least 14 people have been detained in connection with the attack, including two foreigners stopped Tuesday at the international terminal of Istanbul's Ataturk Airport after police checked their cellphones and luggage, according to Anadolu.

The Hurriyet newspaper said a woman identified by Turkish media as the wife of the suspect has told police she didn't know her husband was a member of the Islamic State group.

The woman was detained in the central town of Konya as part of the investigation. Neither she nor her husband has been identified. Hurriyet reported in its online edition that the woman said she learned about the attack on TV and told police she didn't know her husband harbored "sympathies" toward IS.

Focus

By MARTHA MENDOZA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP)—A tiny young woman crouches just outside the airport, crying softly into her thin shawl. It's cold out, but her sleeping toddler is heavy and warm in her arms.

Travelers swarm around: Himalayan trekkers load up expedition backpacks. A Chinese tour group boards a bus. A dozen flight attendants in crisp blue suits and heels click by.

Saro Kumari Mandal, 26, covers her head completely, a bundle of grief.

Hundreds of young Nepali men excitedly wave final good-byes to friends and family. On this day 1,500 will fly out of the Kathmandu airport bound for jobs mostly in Malaysia, Qatar or Saudi Arabia—jobs that are urgently needed by the people of this desperately poor country.

But on this day, too, six young men will come back in wooden caskets, rolled like suitcases out of baggage claim on luggage carts.

On the wooden lid of one someone has written in black marker: "Human Remains, Balkisun Mandal Khatwe, Male—26 years—Nepali."

Saro's husband—another victim of a hidden and escalating tragedy.

The number of Nepali workers going abroad has more than doubled since the country began promoting foreign labor in recent years: from about 220,000 in 2008 to about 500,000 in 2015. Yet the number of deaths among those workers has risen much faster in the same period. One out of every 2,500 workers died in 2008; last year one out of every 500 died, according to an Associated Press analysis of data released by Nepal's Ministry of Labour and Employment.

In total, over 5,000 workers from this small country have died working abroad since 2008—more than the number of U.S. troops killed in the Iraq War.

The causes, in many cases, have been mysterious. Natural death, heart attack or cardiac arrest are listed for nearly half the deaths. Most families are notified that their loved ones simply went to bed and never woke up. That's exactly what Saro was told.

But now medical researchers say these deaths fit a familiar pattern: Every decade or so, dozens, or even hundreds, of seemingly healthy Asian men working abroad in poor conditions start dying in their sleep. It happened in the U.S. in the late 1970s, in Singapore about a decade later



AP
In this Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2016 photo, a woman breaks down after seeing the body of her son Balkisun Mandal Khatwe, a migrant worker who died in his sleep in Qatar, at Belhi village, in Saptari district, Nepal.

Nepalis

At soaring rate seeking jobs abroad come home dead

and more recently in China. The suspected killer even has a name: Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome.

Next year, an international consortium is launching to investigate and hopefully offer solutions.

For today's arrivals, they're too late.

■ ■ ■

Nepal exports iron and steel, carpets, some vegetables—but mainly, Nepal exports men. It even advertises them.

"Nepalese workers are well known for their hard work, dedication and loyalty," boasts the Nepalese Embassy website in Doha, Qatar, where a pre-World Cup construction boom employs about 1.5 million migrants. The Nepali workers "are comparatively cost effective," says the embassy, and they're experienced at "working in the extreme climatic conditions."

The unskilled workers fill a host of global demands: building highways, stadiums and houses in Gulf states and guarding shopping malls, sewing sweatshirts and assembling televisions in Malaysia. Anyone who has bought imported sportswear or electronics, or who plans to go to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, may be using the products of their labor.

Nepali law bans recruiters and employers from charging fees. Qatar, where Balkisun was working, prohibits the fees too. But in reality everyone has to pay for these jobs. The men borrow at 36 percent

interest rates from money lenders or sell off family land to get the \$1,100 stake needed for recruiters, airline tickets and more. Conditions vary by country and employer, but it's not uncommon for workers to find themselves living a dozen or more to a room, sleeping stacked on three-tiered bunks, working 10- to 15-hour days, seven days a week, for years.

If they're lucky—and some are—they can send home wads of cash, about \$300 a month. Often, however, they are tricked or cheated out of their earnings.

About 10 percent of Nepal's 28 million residents are working abroad. They send back more than \$6 billion a year, amounting to about 30 percent of the country's annual revenues. Only Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are more dependent on foreign earnings.

Some come back maimed or disabled, like Salit Mandal, who rolled off a third-level bunk in Malaysia and smashed in his skull. He's in debt, partially paralyzed, and lives with his parents.

"I have no idea what I'm going to do, how I'm going to raise them, because I can't move," he says, gazing at his three children. "If my hands and legs could move I would do something, but I can't do anything at all."

His family had pinned their hopes on him after he returned from an earlier stint in Qatar with enough money to build a five-bedroom house. Now his

mom takes a visitor aside and says the situation is horrible — Salit can't squat by himself over the pit toilet, she says, and she has to clean him up afterward.

His little brother Jamun Mandal, 24, is next in line. He's abandoned his aspirations of going to college and has paid the recruiting broker. He holds up a passport.

"I know it sounds weird to be planning to go, because people die, disappear, they come back in comas," he says, "But what to do?"

Sitting behind her tidy desk at the Department of Foreign Employment, spokeswoman Rama Bhattarai shrugs off the death toll.

"I'm not trying to be insensitive but we have sent millions of workers to more than 100 countries, and so yes, sometimes people will die. They die as foreign employees, they die here when a bus goes off a cliff," she says.

Others are more incensed. Krishna Dawadee, acting director of Kathmandu's one-stop work permit center, waves an arm at the hundreds of young men gathered at the service window seeking final work approvals. Outside the gates, life insurance salesmen grab at the prospective workers' arms and sweaters, trying to pull them into their offices to sell policies. "These are our youth, draining out from our country," Dawadee says. "I am very much worried about these people."

■ ■ ■

Six weeks after Balkisun

Mandal Khatwe made the long journey from his village to the employment office, his wife travels back across the country to retrieve his body.

His casket arrives on a 7 p.m. flight. It takes more than three hours to get paperwork sorted out between his barely literate family and the airport bureaucrats who needed a death certificate, identifications, work permits and more.

Finding transport is less complicated: The casket slides easily into a custom-welded coffin rack. The government of Nepal arranged to have 10 trucks so equipped after labor exports—and deaths abroad—began to rise.

The badly rutted and cracked road from the Kathmandu airport to Belhi village is closed after dark because too many buses have plunged off the narrow, steep, sharp curves. But under starry skies, the truck was waved past checkpoints by police who spotted the rooftop coffin while warming their hands over small fires. After death, Hindu funerals must take place as soon as possible, hopefully by the next dawn.

Saro and her son, just 3 years old, jolt around the backseat for a precarious eight-hour journey. They jounce in their seats as the truck bottoms out in potholes, jerk side to side as it races around corners.

When the truck reaches Belhi, hundreds of women in traditional saris, men in their work clothes and children pour into the narrow dirt street, tears

streaming down their faces. Everyone pushes and shoves to get close to the coffin. Some stand on rooftops. Others crowd a balcony.

Nepal is one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world, and Belhi is one of its poorest places. The Mandals live eight people to a room in one of about 700 mud-and-stick homes set among dry, sparse rice paddies. A shared cellphone is passed from house to house. People are chronically hungry, living on less than \$1 a day.

The Mandals and their neighbors are marginalized in every way: Ethnically, they're from the "untouchable" caste, and they speak Maithili, a language more common in India, just a few miles south.

Family members wrestle Balkisun's coffin off the truck. Mohammed Tohit, 28, watches from across the street, then looks at his hands, the cloudless sky, a distant mango tree. He wipes a wet cheek.

"I knew this guy, and the thing is when you see people coming back in a coffin like this, it's hard," he says.

He adds quietly: "I'm leaving for Saudi in 10 days."

Tohit is the envy and inspiration of the village. He worked in Malaysia for almost six years sewing clothes for Nike, Lacoste and Columbia Sportswear, saving more than \$20,000. That was enough to build a sturdy, cement two-bedroom house with plaster walls and a brick foundation. He bought a piece of farmland and a television set. There's a cow staked outside his woven fence, among the goats and chickens. His round-cheeked, 6-month-old daughter, Saieha, is shy in the arms of his wife, Jarina Khatun.

"I am scared, sure, but I have no way to earn anything here," he says. "I have no choice but to leave again."

Balkisun's brother Ramasis, 35, went for work in Dubai but returned three months later with a debilitating mental illness. Bidhya Nanda, 25, the youngest, is still in the Gulf, working as a janitor in Saudi Arabia. Another brother, 30-year-old Ramkisun, flew back from Malaysia, where he was working in factories making Sony and Panasonic products, when he learned of Balkisun's death.

Their father, Kalaru, hates to see his sons go, but has no option. "We are poor and we don't have any way at all to earn money in our village."

The news of his son's death came in a morning phone call two weeks earlier. It seemed impossible.

Here's what people say about Balkisun: He was a good lad. He didn't smoke. He got
See NEPALIS on NEXT Page

Environment

Why are these birds falling from the sky in South Jersey?

By JACQUELINE L. URGO
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

SHILOH, N.J.—Weather-wise, it had been a fairly typical November day, two days before Thanksgiving, in the western Cumberland County agricultural community of Stow Creek Township—mostly sunny, with a bit of a nip in the air.

Then, all of a sudden, it was raining dead birds.

And by the time the brief “shower” was over, as many as 200 red-winged blackbirds littered the ground in a small housing development off Frank Davis Road surrounded by vast farm fields.

“They just fell from the sky,” said Larry Hajna, a spokesman for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

It was the second time in less than three weeks that a die-off of blackbirds had occurred in the same rural neighborhood; the first time, a couple of dozen dead birds were found. A similar incident had happened in a North Jersey farming area earlier in the year, Hajna said.

After county agricultural agents had been notified by homeowners, the DEP’s Division of Fish and Wildlife arrived in Stow Creek and removed the birds, collecting some of them to be sent to a state lab for necropsy, toxicology, and histopathology tests.

But the results of all the tests were inconclusive, Hajna said last week.

“We did ascertain that the birds suffered trauma and internal bleeding from hitting the ground,” Hajna said. “But



TNS
A red-winged blackbird is nestled among the brush along the Lynch Reservoir at the Lynch Canyon open spaces in Solano County, Calif.

localized nature” of the mortalities. The bird deaths also were not likely caused by compounds reported in wheat seeds planted in an agricultural field, nor were they the result of infectious disease.

“We have determined that the deaths were not caused by pesticides commonly known to be toxic to wildlife and not likely caused by compounds reported in wheat seed planted in an agricultural field,” Hajna said.

A similar die-off occurred in nearby Millville in 2012, and it was later determined that a farmer had legally used a chemical to keep blackbirds from his crop. About 300 birds were reported dead in that incident, Hajna said.

But the dead birds falling from the sky here last month has left some residents here worried about the cause.

“Out in the country like this, you find dead stuff lying around all the time ... but this was kind of weird,” said resident Debbie Hitchner, 32, who said she found a half-dozen of the dead blackbirds in her Frank Davis Road backyard after the incident was reported. “My dog just kept finding them, one after the other.”

what made them fall from the sky in the first place ... we can’t say for certain.”

Even wheat seed from a nearby farmer’s field was collected and tested for chemical compounds by the University of Pennsylvania. The farmer told the DEP’s Bureau of Pesticides that the seed had been treated with the fungicides difenoconazole, mefenoxam and sedaxane, and the insecticide imidacloprid. None of those compounds is considered harmful to birds and none of the chemicals was found to be among those that are sometimes used by farmers to control “nuisance” species like blackbirds, Hajna said.

And while animals falling from the sky is not a usual occurrence, it does happen

across the globe: Besides birds, fish and frogs seem to be the most common.

In 1998, about 10,000 birds, all Lapland longspurs, rained down and died on fields in Minnesota and Iowa after they became disoriented in a snowstorm. Fish can sometimes get caught up in whirlwinds and in meteorological waterspouts and can be carried great distances, such as in 2010, when some striped bass ended up in a Massachusetts backyard about 20 miles from the seacoast.

While it is not illegal in New Jersey for farmers to attempt to protect their crops and control populations of such species as blackbirds, crows, grackles and magpies, agriculturists must follow certain protocols in using such

chemical compounds so that the usage does not damage crops, contaminate feed for livestock, create groundwater hazards, or in any way effect endangered and threatened species of animals and plants.

Populations of red-winged blackbirds are robust, and they are not considered a threatened or endangered species. They are therefore exempt from state and federal regulations that protect some migratory birds, officials said.

Birding officials said habitat loss globally poses a much greater threat to all bird species than do incidents of bird die-offs.

Hajna said the state ultimately ruled out that the kill-off was caused pesticide poisoning because of the “highly

Pangolin trafficking
Chinese officials have seized more than 3 tons of illegally trafficked pangolin scales from a port in Shanghai, according to state media.

Pangolin
Killed for their meat, which is considered a delicacy, and their scales, which are used in traditional Chinese medicine. Pangolins are one of the most trafficked mammals in Asia. All eight species of pangolins have been listed as endangered species and are protected under international law.

Source: PangolinConservation.org, Wildlife Protection Society of India
Graphic: Tribune News Service

NEPALIS

From Page 18

along with everyone. He was very helpful. He was honest.

Balkisun was working for Habtoor Leighton Group in Qatar, loading trucks to build new highways. The highway was being built as part of broader infrastructure improvements for the 2022 World Cup, said his supervisor Ganesh Khang Mandal, 48.

Dubai-based HLG did not respond to requests for an interview. Australia-based CIMIC, a 45 percent owner of HLG, said in a statement that it did not want to comment.

Saro had chatted with Balkisun through Facebook Messenger just the evening before his death.

Although he confided to friends he was having a difficult time with his job, money and housing, he told Saro that everything was going well. He took a selfie in his yellow work hardhat, eyes grinning through protective sunglasses, his face covered in a blue scarf to fend off the harsh climate. He told her about a big festival that day.

“OK, I’ll call you tomorrow morning”—the last words her husband said to her.

This is what happened, according to his supervisor: “After work he went to dinner at 7 and bed at 10. In the morning we tried to wake him up but he didn’t respond. We took the body to the hospital where they did an autopsy and said it was cardiac arrest.”

He’d been in Qatar less than a month.

■ ■ ■

Authorities in Nepal say their citizens seem to die abroad more frequently than their equally vulnerable Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi and Indonesian co-workers, but the explanation for the increased mortality has been unclear.

“It’s usually sleeping disease,” said Kumud Khanal, vice president of the Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies, which represents more than 400 registered agents. “We get the report that he was talking with friends in the evening, had dinner and went to bed, and in the morning he was found dead.” The

deaths are reported as a hypertension problem, he said, like heart attack or cardiac arrest.

But medical experts say there have been waves of deaths before among young, rural southeast Asian men working abroad in physically stressful conditions.

“I see some familiar patterns here with Nepalese workers,” said Patrick Clarkin at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, who has written about the biology and epidemiology of Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome. “I suspect that there would be little harm in improving the diets and living conditions of these young men. Something as simple as a multivitamin could go a long way and with little risk.”

In rural Nepal, people eat rice, lentils and seasonal greens around 10 in the morning, and a second meal of rice and vegetables in the evening. Milk and eggs are almost always available as well.

Abroad, Nepali workers also eat twice a day, but the mainstay is whole meal flour flatbread with some pickle or

a vegetable, and once a day they have chicken. Some in the Middle East say they drink less water at their desert work-sites than they do in mountainous Nepal because, as Hindus, they’re not allowed to use Muslim bathrooms and are forced to wait for hours.

No one has identified a single cause of SUNDS fatalities - medical journal discussions include genetics, infection and nutritional deficiencies. And in Nepal, the syndrome is not being considered at this point. Instead, Nepali authorities say it could be stress, even homesickness, brought on by physically demanding jobs in extremely hot climates.

Utah State University professor Ron Munger studied heart scans of migrant workers in Thailand after hundreds died in their sleep in Singapore, where they had gone for jobs. He said the Nepali deaths “sound like exactly the same thing.”

While the causes of the previous strings of deaths have never been pinpointed, the number of fatalities dropped in each case when workplace safety, housing

and diet were improved.

“It’s tragic and terrible, and for me this is personal,” said cardiac epidemiology researcher Nirmal Aryal, a Nepali native at University of Otago in Wellington, New Zealand.

He recently published a “Call for Public Health Action” in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health, demanding with colleagues in the United Kingdom and Nepal that universal labor laws be enforced and accurate mortality records kept. He’s forming a consortium to investigate migrant deaths across borders. Its first focus, in 2017, will be on workers from Nepal.

“It’s critical we find out what is happening,” he said.

■ ■ ■

Arriving in their village, Saro steps out of the truck, sees the coffin and falls screaming onto the dusty road. Two sisters scoop her up and carry her, howling, into the family home.

In Hindu mythology, if you don’t see the face of a loved one, you will not believe they have died. And so villagers cram around the coffin while

an elder pulls the white wrap off Balkisun’s face. Saro, sobbing and screaming, is shoved forward to look.

Someone pours water over Saro’s hair, rinsing out the red tikka powder, which is only allowed for married women. The priest breaks the glass bangles on her wrist into the coffin—those too are for married women.

Saro isn’t allowed to marry. She will probably live on the edges of society, earning nothing more than some food to eat and a place to sleep.

“Where’s my dad?” asks her 3-year-old son, Siban, perched on the shoulders of a stocky uncle.

About 50 men from the village bring Balkisun’s body on a freshly cut bamboo platform to the river chanting, “The name of Ram is the supreme truth.” Soon, the boy will be purified, dipped naked in the river. He will be wrapped in white cloth. And with his uncles’ hands guiding his own, he will take a bundle of burning twigs and light his father’s funeral pyre.

Life & Style

Megyn Kelly leaving Fox News, will host 2 shows on NBC

NEW YORK (AP)—Megyn Kelly, the Fox News star who's had a contentious relationship with President-elect Donald Trump, said Tuesday that she's leaving the network for NBC News, where she will host a daytime talk show and a weekend newsmagazine, as well as contribute to breaking news coverage.

NBC News made the announcement Tuesday, ending months of speculation over whether she would re-up with Fox, where she has flourished while suffering bruised feelings in recent months, or start a new chapter in her career. Her contract with Fox expires this summer. Her last show on Fox will be Friday night.

Kelly's departure deprives Fox News of its second-most-watched host, behind only Bill O'Reilly, and a hole at 9 p.m. in its prime-time lineup.

"While I will greatly miss my colleagues at Fox, I am delighted to be joining the NBC News family and taking on a new challenge," Kelly said in a message on Twitter on Tuesday.

Rupert Murdoch, executive chairman of Fox, said that "we thank Megyn Kelly for her 12 years of contributions to Fox News. We hope she enjoys tremendous success in her career and wish her and her family all the best."

Kelly's star power grew after she became a flashpoint in the presidential campaign after Trump objected to her questioning in the first Republican presidential debate a year and a half ago. He tweeted angry messages about her and boycotted another Fox debate after the network refused to replace her as one of the debate moderators.

She also became a central figure in the downfall of former Fox News chief Roger Ailes, telling in-house inves-



In this May 5, 2016 file photo, Megyn Kelly poses for a portrait in New York. Kelly, the Fox News star whose 12-year stint has been marked by upheavals at her network and personal attacks on the campaign trail, is headed to NBC News.

tigators of inappropriate conduct by Ailes that supported women who had made similar accusations.

Details about Kelly's new jobs at NBC will be revealed in upcoming months, said Andrew Lack, chairman of the NBC Universal News Group.

"Megyn is an exceptional journalist and news anchor, who has had an extraordinary career," Lack said. "She's demonstrated tremendous skill and poise, and we're lucky to have her."

Kelly wasn't immediately available for comment about what made her choose to leave Fox. But she said in an interview with The Associated Press in November that the factors she was weighing "mostly involve a 7-, 5- and 3-year-old," her children. Her Fox show airs live at 9 p.m., giving her no time at home with her children in the evenings.

She stressed that point in closing remarks on her pro-

gram Tuesday, which she addressed to the audience.

Kelly said she valued the "human connection" the show gave her with viewers, but said she needed more of that connection with her children.

She expressed gratitude to her next employer, NBC, and current one.

"I am deeply thankful to Fox News for the wonderful 12 years I have had here. I've grown up here, and been given every chance a young reporter could ever ask for," Kelly said.

As a star in demand, Kelly was no doubt able to seek a schedule that would give her more time at home in the evening.

A former lawyer who was raised in upstate New York, Kelly turned to television and got a job in Fox's Washington office. She was noticed by Ailes, and given a daytime show. Her poise and sharpness, and willingness to ask tough questions of all politi-

cal sides, made her a star and led Ailes to give her a coveted prime-time slot on cable news' most-watched network.

Her contentious relationship with Trump began when she asked the Republican businessman about statements he had made about women, infuriating him. He tweeted his disdain for her and although they made peace when Kelly interviewed Trump for a prime-time special last May, the relationship never became warm. Trump made Kelly's prime-time colleague, Sean Hannity, his preferred stopping place for interviews during the campaign and didn't come on her Fox News Channel show.

"I really had to choose - am I going to be an honest journalist ... or am I going to suck

up to Trump?" she told the AP. "I chose the former, and it's worked out fine for me."

It put Kelly in an awkward position with Fox News Channel viewers who favored Trump, however. At one point during a Hannity interview with Trump, a live audience at a Trump rally booed the mention of her name.

Kelly's immediate silence after Gretchen Carlson's lawsuit last summer alleging unwanted advances from Ailes, at a time other Fox News personalities were supporting their boss, was telling. She told investigators that Ailes had made sexually suggestive comments to her and tried to kiss her, then made an angry reference to her contract when she rebuffed him. Ailes has denied any untoward advances involving Kelly.

Box office top 20: 'Rogue One,' 'Sing' lead holiday frame

NEW YORK (AP)—"Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" remained the number 1 film at the box office for the third straight week, as the "Star Wars" spinoff maintained its holiday-season dominance into the new year.

The Disney blockbuster sold \$65.5 million in tickets in North America over the four-day weekend, according to final box-office figures Tuesday. Another holdover, Universal's animated "Sing," also followed in second for the second straight week with \$57.3 million.

Sony's sci-fi romance "Passengers" (\$21.1 million over its second weekend) and Fox's video-game adaptation "Assassin's Creed" (\$11.4 million in its second weekend) had a harder time drawing audiences to match their budgets, while Oscar contenders "La La Land," "Fences" and "Manchester by the Sea" continued to pull in big, largely adult crowds.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Monday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Tuesday by comScore:

1. "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," Disney, \$65,522,676, 4,157 locations, \$15,762 average, \$440,901,381, 3 weeks.
2. "Sing," Universal, \$57,290,420, 4,029 locations, \$14,220 average, \$180,891,910, 2 weeks.
3. "Passengers," Sony, \$21,074,190, 3,478 locations, \$6,059 average, \$66,177,803, 2 weeks.



This file image released by Lucasfilm Ltd. shows Felicity Jones as Jyn Erso in a scene from, "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story."

4. "Moana," Disney, \$15,198,280, 2,775 locations, \$5,477 average, \$214,257,319, 6 weeks.
5. "Why Him?," 20th Century Fox, \$13,121,668, 3,008 locations, \$4,362 average, \$37,680,255, 2 weeks.
6. "Fences," Paramount, \$13,111,773, 2,301 locations, \$5,698 average, \$32,813,917, 3 weeks.
7. "La La Land," Lionsgate, \$12,576,343, 750 locations, \$16,768 average, \$37,291,542, 4 weeks.
8. "Assassin's Creed," 20th Century Fox, \$11,365,875, 2,996 locations, \$3,794 average, \$42,409,393, 2 weeks.
9. "Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them," Warner Bros., \$5,612,945, 1,842 locations, \$3,047 average, \$225,627,739, 7 weeks.
10. "Collateral Beauty," Warner Bros., \$5,406,439, 2,745 locations, \$1,970 average, \$27,062,056, 3 weeks.
11. "Office Christmas Party," Paramount, \$4,548,443, 2,347 locations, \$1,938 average, \$52,095,118, 4 weeks.
12. "Manchester By The Sea," Roadside Attractions, \$4,244,121, 1,206 locations, \$3,519 average, \$28,468,772, 7 weeks.
13. "Lion," The Weinstein Company, \$3,002,227, 525 locations, \$5,719 average, \$6,834,730, 6 weeks.
14. "Dangal," UTV Communications, \$2,691,952, 338 locations, \$7,964 average, \$9,816,471, 2 weeks.
15. "Jackie," Fox Searchlight, \$2,060,048, 359 locations, \$5,738 average, \$7,536,054, 5 weeks.
16. "Arrival," Paramount, \$1,848,977, 545 locations, \$3,393 average, \$92,681,309, 8 weeks.
17. "Hidden Figures," 20th Century Fox, \$1,191,683, 25 locations, \$47,667 average, \$2,658,078, 2 weeks.
18. "Trolls," 20th Century Fox, \$921,563, 418 locations, \$2,205 average, \$150,588,191, 9 weeks.
19. "Doctor Strange," Disney, \$861,738, 466 locations, \$1,849 average, \$230,323,048, 9 weeks.
20. "Hacksaw Ridge," Lionsgate, \$529,446, 352 locations, \$1,504 average, \$64,738,291, 9 weeks.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange interviewed on 'Hannity'

NEW YORK (AP)—Sean Hannity interviews WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange tonight on "Hannity."

During the hour, Assange insists the Russian government was not his source for the hacked emails he released from the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta.

In the interview, Assange argues that the Obama administration has pushed the narrative of Russia meddling in the U.S. election to delegitimize President-elect Donald Trump.

"Hannity" airs at 10 p.m. EST on Fox News Channel.



In this Friday Feb. 5, 2016 file photo, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange speaks from the balcony of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Assange will be interviewed by Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity on "Hannity," airing, Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017 at 10 p.m.

Janet Jackson, husband welcome son Eissa Al Mana

Rockettes boss: It's 'very appropriate' to perform for Trump

NEW YORK (AP)—A secret audio recording captured some of the tension between members of the Radio City Rockettes and their employer, Madison Square Garden, over a plan to have them dance at Donald Trump's inauguration.

The recording, leaked to Marie Claire magazine, was made at a private Dec. 27 meeting between MSG Chairman James Dolan and performers in the dance group.

The meeting came days after one dancer posted on Instagram that she was "embarrassed" by the gig, which in turn touched off a social media kerfuffle, with Trump opponents calling on the Rockettes to boycott the event and Trump supporters saying the dancers should keep their politics to themselves.

During the meeting, Dolan

told the dancers that performing at the inauguration was an opportunity, saying it was "a huge moment in the country's history."

He continued, "We are an American brand, and I think it's very appropriate that the Rockettes dance in the inaugural and Fourth of July and our country's great historical moments."

One dancer complained about the social media backlash, calling it "unbearable."

"I think that the Rockettes have always been apolitical, and now by performing at this particular inauguration, it's making us political," she said.

Dolan said he was confident the performance wouldn't hurt the Rockettes' brand. He also reminded the dancers that many people who come to New York to see the Rockettes perform voted

for Trump.

"I find it a little ironic. I get all of these emails, too, from people saying, 'Don't perform for this hateful person.' And then they proceed to spew out this diatribe of hate," he said.

One dancer said: "It just sounds like you're asking us to be tolerant of intolerance."

"Yeah, in a way, I guess we are doing that," Dolan said. "What other choices do we have? What else would you suggest?"

After the Marie Claire article was published Tuesday, MSG released a statement saying Dolan stood by his comments. The company also attacked the unidentified person who made the recording, saying she had been "deceitful and cowardly" and violated the confidentiality "of all of her sister Rockettes."

NEW YORK (AP)—Janet Jackson's latest escapade: motherhood.

The 50-year-old pop superstar and husband Wissam Al Mana welcomed their son, Eissa Al Mana, on Tues-

day, a representative for the singer said.

"Janet had a stress-free healthy delivery and is resting comfortably. No further details are available at this time," the statement

read.

Last year Jackson postponed her tour to plan a family. Eissa Al Mana is the singer's first child.

Jackson and Al Mana were married in 2012.



AP
In this June 28, 2015, file photo, Janet Jackson accepts the ultimate icon: music dance visual award at the BET Awards in Los Angeles.

Beyonce, Radiohead, Kendrick Lamar to headline Coachella

NEW YORK (AP)—Beyonce is one of the headliners of the 2017 Coachella music festival—a first for the pop star.

Festival producer Goldenvoice announced Tuesday that Beyonce, Radiohead and Kendrick Lamar will headline the two-weekend festival in April in Indio, California. Radiohead will perform on April 14 and 21; Beyonce on April 15 and 22; and Lamar on April 16 and 23.

Tickets, including three-day passes, go on sale Wednesday.

Beyonce last appeared at Coachella in 2014 when she danced onstage during her sister Solange's set.

Other performers for the 2017 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival include Lorde, the xx, Bon Iver, Future, Gucci Mane, Justice, DJ Snake, DJ Khaled and Father John Misty.



AP
In this Nov. 4, 2016 file photo, Beyonce performs at a Get Out the Vote concert for Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton in Cleveland.

Singer Kim Burrell off 'Ellen' show after anti-gay sermon

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ellen DeGeneres says that Kim Burrell isn't going to appear on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" as scheduled.

DeGeneres' statement Tuesday on Twitter came several days after Burrell refused to apologize for a sermon in which she referred to gays and lesbians as perverted.

A tape of Burrell preaching at Houston's Love & Liberty Fellowship Church was circulated online.

The gospel singer and Pharrell were to perform a

song from the movie "Hidden Figures" Thursday on the show. DeGeneres is one of show business' most prominent lesbians.

DeGeneres' tweet read: "For those asking, Kim Burrell will not be appearing on my show."

There was no further comment from the show or DeGeneres.

Pharrell posted on Instagram that "I condemn hate speech of any kind," making no specific reference to Burrell.

Relative says family fundraiser has gone to the well too often

DEAR ABBY: A family member keeps setting up fundraisers every time she wants to buy something for her family. If a child needs a special class, she asks the relatives to pitch in to pay for it. When her husband wanted to return to college, she brought all the extended family together to see who could contribute.

She has now set up a fundraiser for family and friends to raise \$6,000 to send her teenaged daughter to an expensive performing arts camp. I think this is extravagant. If they can't afford it, they should select a camp they CAN afford or have the 16-year-old go out and earn the money. I also think they should be saving for college rather than camp.

This woman's father was a preacher, and sometimes I think she never got the message that fundraising is usually for charity, not for individuals who happen to need some cash. Am I wrong to be embarrassed by what she's doing, or is this a new normal?

EMBARRASSED IN TEXAS

DEAR EMBARRASSED: You say your relative is the daughter of a preacher. There is a saying in the Bible, "Seek and ye shall find." Another way of putting it is, "It never hurts to ask." If you feel your relative is using others for something that should be her responsibility, you are free to just say no, and to do so without embarrassment.

DEAR ABBY: I'm retired and have the time to sew and quilt

projects, which I give as gifts. I presented a "Quilt of Valor" to my father to honor his military service. I also gave a sibling one of my personalized projects as a birthday gift.

Abby, when we visited their home recently, I was horrified to see one of their dogs sleeping on one of the pillows I had made for them. When the dog woke up, it proceeded to scratch itself and then drag the hair-covered pillow through the house. I have been asked to make a quilt for a disabled child living at home who also has a dog that sleeps on her bed.

I no longer want to invest my time and energy after what happened to my gift. I feel unappreciated. Would it be wrong to refuse the request and say something about "gift abuse"?

SEW PERPLEXED IN THE NORTHWEST

DEAR SEW PERPLEXED: Verbalizing your refusal would be undiplomatic. Regardless of the fact that your hard work wasn't appreciated as you hoped it would be, I do not recommend that you accuse the family of "gift abuse." It appears they're dealing with more important issues right now.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been together for 21 years. I'm extremely social, while he is not. For the past six to 10 years he has become increasingly resistant to going out in public places, especially when it involves getting together with my family or friends.

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



During last year's holidays, I pleaded yet another "sudden illness" on his behalf. I feel he makes himself ill with anxiety so he can bow out at the last minute. When I cancel plans we've made—which is often—he generally "feels better" after we cancel. It's frustrating. While I am sympathetic, I'm tired of making excuses knowing he's probably fine. What can I do?

SOCIAL BUTTERFLY IN PORTLAND, ORE.

DEAR BUTTERFLY: I think you should go without him, and stop making excuses.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Thomas' 29 points, 15 assists send Celtics past Jazz



BOSTON (AP)—Isaiah Thomas had 29 points and a career-high 15 assists, and the Boston Celtics made 17 3-pointers for the second straight game in beating the Utah Jazz 115-104 on Tuesday night.

Al Horford and Jae Crowder added 21 points apiece and Avery Bradley scored 14 for the Celtics, who have won four of five and eight of 10.

The Celtics ended Utah's four-game winning streak and beat the Jazz for the ninth straight time in Boston.

Gordon Hayward led Utah with 23 points. Derrick Favors scored 12 and Rudy Gobert pulled down 13 rebounds, extending his streak of 10 or more to 21 consecutive games.

Thomas, coming off his career-high 52 points Friday against the Heat, has scored at least 20 in 19 straight games. He added another personal best Tuesday with 15 assists, two more than his previous high of 13 against Charlotte in December 2015.

Thomas' 3-pointer with 2:53 left in the second quarter started Boston on a 10-4 run that gave the Celtics a 54-45 halftime lead. Boston stretched the lead to 68-54 early in the third.

Shelvin Mack pulled Utah to 73-65, but the Celtics pulled away again. Horford started the run with a 3 from the top of the key and Thomas drove through traffic for a layup. Marcus Smart added a basket before Crowder hit his fifth 3-pointer of the game to put Boston up 83-66.

Utah's only points during the Celtics' run came on technical foul shots by Hayward, one for a 3-second violation and another when Crowder was called for a technical during a timeout.

Boston went up by 15 early in the fourth before the Jazz used an 11-3 run to pull to 98-91 on consecutive layups by



Joe Johnson. That was as close as it got and the Jazz were forced to foul late, sending Thomas to the line four times. He was perfect from the stripe for the second straight game.

Spurs 110, Raptors 82

In San Antonio, Kawhi Leonard had 25 points, LaMarcus Aldridge added 23 and San Antonio held Toronto to its lowest score of the season.

San Antonio dominated a matchup of teams with the second-best record in each conference, leading by as many as 34 points.

Leonard and Aldridge combined to shoot 19 for 28 from the field, but it was veteran point guard Tony Parker who set the tone for the Spurs with 15 points and eight assists in 23 minutes.

DeMar DeRozan led the Raptors with 26 points, but backcourt mate Kyle Lowry had only six on 2-for-9 shooting.

Pacers 121, Pistons 116

In Auburn Hills, Mich., Paul George had 32 points and Indiana beat Detroit.

Myles Turner and Jeff Teague each scored 17 for Indiana, which blew a 15-point

first-half lead but pulled away in the fourth quarter to win its third straight game. The Pacers (18-18) are 2 1/2 games ahead of Detroit (16-21) in the Eastern Conference standings.

Tobias Harris led the Pistons with 22 points. Andre Drummond and Reggie Jackson each had a double-double.

Detroit lost for the eighth time in 10 games, with two of the defeats coming at home to Indiana.

76ers 93, Timberwolves 91

In Philadelphia, Robert Cov-

ington made a fall-away shot off an inbounds pass with 0.2 seconds left to give Philadelphia a victory over Minnesota.

The Sixers needed the late basket after they blew a 26-point lead and seemed headed to overtime. Ricky Rubio, just a 26 percent 3-point shooter, buried one with 1.6 seconds left that tied it at 91.

Joel Embiid scored 25 points and Ersan Ilyasova had 19 for the Sixers.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 23 points and 15 rebounds for the Timberwolves, and Zach LaVine scored 28.

Mavericks 113, Wizards 105

In Dallas, Harrison Barnes scored 26 points and Deron Williams added 21 as Dallas rallied to beat Washington.

Devin Harris had 17 points and Seth Curry 16 for the Mavericks. Williams, Harris and Curry each hit four 3-pointers as Dallas went 17 of 32 from long range.

John Wall led Washington with 27 points and Bradley Beal added 25 for the Wizards, who fell to 1-6 on the second half of back-to-back games. They lost to Houston on Monday night.

The Mavericks took control early in the fourth quarter, scoring the first eight points and building a 110-100 lead on Barnes' 3-pointer with 2:51

AP
Boston Celtics guard Isaiah Thomas (4) drives to the basket against the Utah Jazz during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017.

to play.

Kings 120, Nuggets 113

In Denver, DeMarcus Cousins scored 31 points, and Darren Collison had 26 points and seven assists in Sacramento's victory over Denver.

The Kings led most of the way to stop a two-game skid and win for the fifth time in seven games.

Denver got within three in the fourth quarter and had chances to trim it to one or tie, but Sacramento kept extending the lead with Cousins on the bench.

The lead was five when he returned, and he helped the Kings push it to 11 with 2:22 left with assists on a 3-pointer by Arron Afflalo and a layup by Garrett Temple.

Danilo Gallinari led the Nuggets with 24 points.

Suns 99, Heat 90

In Phoenix, Devin Booker scored 27 points—18 in the second half—and rookie Marquese Chriss added a career-best 18 as Phoenix handed short-handed Miami its sixth consecutive loss.

The Suns snapped a 12-game losing streak against Miami. Phoenix hadn't beaten the Heat since Nov. 3, 2009.

Goran Dragic scored 22 of his 24 points in the first half for the Heat, who had just eight available players in the opener of a six-game road trip.

Willie Reed had 22 points and 18 rebounds for Miami, both career highs.

Eric Bledsoe added 17 points for the Suns, who stretched a four-point halftime lead to 19 in the second half.

Lakers 116, Grizzlies 102

In Los Angeles, Nick Young scored 20 points, D'Angelo Russell added 18 and they keyed an early barrage of 3-pointers that sent Los Angeles past Memphis.

Julius Randle had a triple-double for Los Angeles with 19 points, 14 rebounds and 11 assists.

The Lakers made a season-high 17 3-pointers, all but one coming in the first three quarters. They finished 17 of 33 from beyond the arc despite missing nine consecutive attempts in the final period. Young and Russell each connected on six 3s.

Marc Gasol led the Grizzlies with 22 points, seven assists and six rebounds. Mike Conley had 21 points.

Hornacek: Maybe Knicks 'just not capable' of defending

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks need some new defensive schemes—or perhaps some new players.

Coach Jeff Hornacek said maybe the ones he has are "just not capable" of defending after their 115-103 loss to the Orlando Magic on Monday night.

The Knicks have lost a season-high five straight games and the last two have been particularly ugly. They allowed a season-high 69 points in the first half to James Harden and Houston on Saturday night, then surrendered 67 more by halftime Monday to an Orlando team that isn't exactly an offensive

powerhouse.

"I think they're trying. We might not be good defensively," Hornacek said. "We might have to start figuring out ways to trap and do some gimmicky defenses."

That would only work if the personnel can execute them, and Hornacek isn't sure they are.

"Maybe we're just not capable," Hornacek said. "I don't know. That's what we're going to have to figure out. We might have to play some of these other guys."

Told about Hornacek's remarks, Carmelo Anthony said he didn't want to comment and preferred to ask Hor-

nacek about them himself.

"I believe that we have the guys to do it," Anthony said. "We have to want to do it. If the coaches are giving us the schemes, whether we agree with it or not we have to do it. That's what they're here for."

Defense has been a season-long problem for the Knicks, who put former interim coach Kurt Rambis, now an assistant under Hornacek, in charge of overseeing it earlier in the season. But the Knicks still struggle, coming into the game allowing 108.3 points per game to rank 25th in the NBA.

They hoped they would

be better after signing center Joakim Noah, the former Defensive Player of the Year, in the offseason. He said he didn't know what to say about Hornacek's comments.

"I know I am here and I feel like this group can do a lot better," Noah said.

"We've just got to stay together. We have a lot of work to do. Defensively we're not where we need to be. We've got to look at ourselves individually first and see what we can do better in terms of our effort and things like that, and then it's about being on the same page. We're all over the place right now."

Bengals' Pacman Jones accused of head-butting cops, spitting



CINCINNATI
(AP)—Cincinnati Bengals cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones

was jailed Tuesday on charges he head-butted police and spit on a nurse after being arrested for disorderly conduct in his latest brush with the law. Authorities said he was so combative that he had to be placed in a restraint chair.

A lawyer representing Jones at his initial court appearance told a judge he "vehemently denies" the allegations against him. The Hamilton County judge set bond at \$37,500 for Jones and ordered that he submit to a blood test.

The Hamilton County sheriff's office said Jones would remain jailed until the blood test can be performed Wednesday morning. Sheriff Jim Neil said Jones was "disorderly and combative" throughout his booking just after midnight Tuesday and had to be put in restraints.

"Whether someone is a professional athlete, a blue collar



Baltimore Ravens wide receiver Steve Smith (89) runs against Cincinnati Bengals cornerback Adam Jones (24) in the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017, in Cincinnati.

worker or homeless, our staff will treat them with respect and we expect the same," Neil said in a statement. "Regardless of who they are, if they

endanger my deputies, our medical staff or themselves, we will take action."

Court records show Jones, who has a history of trouble with the law during his NFL career, is accused of pushing and poking a man in the eye, then struggling with Cincinnati police officers by head-butting, kicking and refusing to get into the police car. He then spit on a nurse's hand while being booked into the jail, police said.

The spitting, following his arrest on misdemeanor charges of assault, disorderly conduct and obstructing official business, resulted in a felony count of harassment with a bodily

substance, authorities said.

A prosecutor said the altercation began when Jones started pounding on doors at the Millennium Hotel, near the Bengals' stadium in downtown Cincinnati. He then pushed and poked a security guard, authorities said.

Public defender Lauren Staley said he "vehemently denies" that he assaulted anyone and will hire an attorney to contest the charges.

She said Jones, who stood next to her in court nodding in agreement, has witnesses for his defense and had waited for police to arrive to explain what happened.

"They essentially didn't

hear his side of the story before placing him under arrest," Staley said.

Bengals spokesman Jack Brennan said the club is aware of the incident but by policy doesn't comment on unresolved legal matters.

Jones will be subject to potential NFL discipline after the case is resolved. Jones' agent didn't respond immediately to a request for comment.

Jones, who played in Sunday's season-ending home victory over Baltimore, has had legal issues since making his NFL debut with Tennessee in 2005 after playing for West Virginia University.

He was suspended as a Ti-

tan by the NFL throughout the 2007 season, then was suspended again during the 2008 season as a member of the Dallas Cowboys.

The Atlanta native was acquitted in 2013 on an assault charge in Hamilton County after a woman accused him of punching her in a nightclub. Earlier that year, he paid a fine for disorderly conduct after police accused him of making offensive comments at a traffic stop. He also pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct in January 2012 after an arrest at a Cincinnati bar.

Earlier, Jones pleaded an equivalent of no contest to a misdemeanor charge of conspiracy to commit disorderly conduct in a 2007 Las Vegas strip club melee. Jones was blamed for instigating violence that led to the shooting by someone else of two club employees, one left paralyzed from the waist down. He was ordered to pay more than \$12.4 million in damages.

The Titans made Jones the sixth overall pick in the 2005 draft, and he started 28 games in his first two seasons. Arrests and suspensions nearly scuttled his career before the Bengals signed him in 2010 and he became a regular starting defensive back and punt returner.

Source: Broncos get OK to interview 3 NFL assistants

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—Denver GM John Elway has been granted permission to interview three assistants currently in the playoffs for his vacant head coaching position, according to a person with knowledge of the Broncos' plans.

The person, speaking on condition of anonymity because the team isn't revealing its interview schedule, told The Associated Press that the Broncos will interview Kyle Shanahan, Vance Joseph and Dave Toub in the next week.

The Broncos are seeking a successor to Gary Kubiak, 55, who stepped down Monday for health reasons with two years remaining on his contract.

The Broncos' vacancy is the most attractive of the half-dozen head coach openings in the NFL because of their dazzling championship-level defense and ownership's willingness to spend money in free agency along with two young quarterbacks Elway is very high on.

The team will interview Shanahan, the Falcons offensive coordinator and son of former long-time Broncos coach Mike Shanahan, this weekend because Atlanta has a first-round bye in the NFC playoffs.

The Chiefs have a bye in the AFC playoffs, so Toub can interview this week.

Joseph will have to wait until next week because the

Dolphins play at Pittsburgh in the AFC wild-card round Sunday.

Elway said Monday one of his top job qualifications that he's looking for is the ability to develop his young quarterbacks Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch. He also said the ability to relate to today's player was paramount and twice Elway mentioned he was intrigued by some of the new names out there this time around.

"Obviously there are a lot of young guys out there that have a lot of potential and very bright young guys," Elway said, "so hopefully we can get one of those."

This is Elway's third coaching search in six seasons as Broncos GM. His first two hires had previous experience, John Fox in Carolina and Kubiak in Houston.

Shanahan is 37 and Joseph 44.

Joseph interviewed for the Broncos' job two years ago when Kubiak was hired and has ties to the Denver area, having played quarterback and running back at the University of Colorado from 1990-95.

Toub is 54, a year younger than Kubiak, who retired after going 24-11 in two seasons in Denver.

Kubiak led the Broncos to a 24-10 win over Carolina in Super Bowl 50, but the Broncos slipped to 9-7 in 2016 and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2010.

Oswieiler to start for Texans against Raiders

HOUSTON (AP)—Brock Oswieiler will start at quarterback for the Houston Texans on Saturday in their wild-card game against the Oakland Raiders.

Coach Bill O'Brien announced the decision on Tuesday with Tom Savage, who had started the past two games, still recovering from a concussion he suffered on Sunday.

Oswieiler started the first 14 games this season before being benched on Dec. 18 against Jacksonville after throwing interceptions on consecutive drives in the second quarter.

But Oswieiler got another chance after Savage got a concussion early in the second quarter of a loss to Tennessee on Sunday.

Oswieiler had struggled with inconsistency and turnovers before being benched, but was better on Sunday when he threw for 253 yards and a touchdown and ran for another score.

"I thought Brock did some really good things on Sunday with his teammates and almost brought us all the way back,"

O'Brien said.

"Did a nice job and we have a lot of confidence in him that he's going to go out there and play well on Saturday."

Veteran left tackle Duane Brown was also impressed with Oswieiler's work on Sunday.

"I thought he played loose," Brown said. "I thought he communicated well recognizing the front, getting us into the right plays, made some good throws. Had the touchdown run there, so I thought he played tough."

Savage remains in the concussion protocol and O'Brien said if he is cleared he will be the backup on Saturday. If not, Brandon Weeden, who hasn't played since last season, will back up Oswieiler.

This game will be an opportunity for Oswieiler to redeem himself after failing to live up to expectations in his first season in Houston after signing a \$72 million contract in the offseason.

O'Brien thinks Oswieiler benefited from taking a step back to observe things after he was benched and said he

played more "freely" than he had in the past on Sunday.

"I'm sure that in some ways it's painful to go through that, but in some ways the backup position may have helped him," he said.

Oswieiler has thrown for 2,957 yards with 15 touchdowns and 16 interceptions this season. This will be his first postseason start after he was benched in favor of Peyton Manning before the playoffs last season with the Denver Broncos.

Savage played well when he took over for Oswieiler against Jacksonville, throwing for 260 yards to help Houston rally for the win.

But he failed to move the offense consistently last week against Cincinnati and couldn't do much on Sunday before he was injured. He had just 25 yards passing.

While Houston has decided on its starter, the Raiders are still dealing with questions at quarterback after Matt McGloin left with a shoulder injury in his first start since Derek Carr broke his

leg the previous week.

Rookie Connor Cook took over and could have to make his first NFL start on Saturday if McGloin can't go.

This will be the second time the Texans have played the Raiders this season after Oakland got a 27-20 win in Mexico City on Nov. 21.

The Texans will need Oswieiler to improve this week if they hope to win a playoff game for the first time since the 2012 season.

Houston's offense has often been ineffective this season with him at the helm and the team's passing game ranks 29th in the NFL by averaging just 198.5 yards a game.

O'Brien likes what he's seen from Oswieiler since his benching and is eager to see what he can do on Saturday.

"He's done a good job. He's been a pro," O'Brien said. "He really hasn't changed his routine at all. He's been in here studying like he's the starter. He's in here this morning getting ready ... he feels good and I think he's ready to go."

Hideki Matsuyama hopes to extend his hot streak

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Unbeatable at the end of the year, Hideki Matsuyama went home to Japan and nearly met his match.

His father.

"It was close," Matsuyama said, laughing as the translation was given in English.

No score was revealed, though none was necessary.

Matsuyama wrapped up his third straight victory in the Bahamas by holding off British Open champion Henrik Stenson, and then he headed home to spend time with family and friends. He had what he described as a "fair share" of sake to celebrate his best year—no one had more than his five victories worldwide—that elevated him to No. 6 in the world and into the elite of golf.

Still, nothing topped the time he spent with his father, Mikio Matsuyama.

"My father, when he played a lot, he was probably a plus-2," Matsuyama said, referring to his father's handicap index. "We hadn't played for probably 10 years together. My father hadn't even played golf for probably a year. So this past offseason, we were able to play. It was special."

The tales of fathers and sons in golf go back as far as Old Tom Morris and Young Tom Morris, and the bond



with the Matsuyamas is special. Mikio Matsuyama introduced his son to golf, taught him the fundamentals and remains the only coach he ever had. He rarely travels with him except for the big tournaments, though he was there when his son won the Japan Open.

There wasn't much to teach during their time in Japan. Matsuyama was the hottest player in golf at the end of the year, winning four of his last five tournaments while playing in four countries. And the last three victories were not really close.

He became the first Asian to

win a World Golf Championship with his seven-shot victory over Stenson and Daniel Berger in the HSBC Champions. He won by seven in the Taiheiyo Masters in Japan. And he had a seven-shot lead over Stenson in the Hero World Challenge until a late stumble led to a two-shot victory.

Matsuyama is part of the next generation of stars, yet he brings an old-school mentality. The greatest value of learning the game from his father is understanding his own swing. If his swing is off, Matsuyama fixes it himself.

He did accept some impor-

tant help from another player, Hiroshi Iwata, who encouraged him to use the "Pelz Putting Tutor." It's a small metal plate with two tiny steel balls at the end that are set apart just over the width of a golf ball, designed to help players line up putts and with their stroke. Iwata also gave him a drill of making 10 straight putts from 3 feet using only his left hand, then his right hand, and both hands.

With five victories come high hopes.

Matsuyama will try to make it four straight victories in the SBS Tournament of Champions. In his only other appear-

ance at Kapalua, he started the final round in a tie for the lead with Jimmy Walker, ran out of birdies and tied for third.

It wasn't all sake and golf with his father in Japan. Matsuyama knew he would be starting up the new year in

only a few weeks, and there is a part of him that wants to keep this hot streak going, ideally through the spring and into the Masters.

Augusta National is where he first received at least scant notice in the United States. He won the Asian Amateur in 2010 to earn a spot at Augusta National at age 19, and he recalls the one goal he had in his Masters debut.

"I was just hoping to be able to play four days," he said. "In reality, I just didn't want to embarrass myself in two days."

NMSA

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last year (April, June, and August). Other nominees are tennis' Isabel Heras (January) and Anika Camacho (November), swimming's Mariana Batalones (February) and Ashley Dangol (March), and members of Saipan Paddling Club's youth squad. NMSA will also accept as nominee the winner of the Female Athlete of the Month for December.

For the male student division, two-time monthly winners Lennosuke Suzuki (February and March) and tennis' Robbie Schorr (June and August) top the nominees and are joined by athletics' Jerald Castillo (June), soccer's Rintaro Miyawaki (April), swimming's Jinnosuke Suzuki (October), tennis' Daniel Kang (November), basketball's Jester Kintaro (May), and paddling's Misaki Kitami (January).

For the Male and Female Athletes of the Year, the nominees are (men's) Joshua Andrew, Bishop Ryan Jimenez,

Douglas Schmidt, Salofi Welch, and Aaron Tomokane; (women's) Zarinae Sapong, Harumi Suzuki, Sabrina Pangelinan, and Jennifer Cui.

For the Team of the Year, it will be a close battle among the CNMI All-Stars, the Marianas Outrigger Canoe Club's Men's Team, and the CNMI Junior Tennis Team. The CNMI All-Stars ruled the inaugural Micronesian Baseball Classic after pulling off a 15-14 thriller against rival Guam, while MOC's men's team reigned supreme in its division in the Mau Fatuul Classic and the 2016 Micronesian Cup in Palau. The Commonwealth's junior tennis players, on the other hand, dominated the 2016 North Pacific Regional Championships and won the most medals in the 2016 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships held in Fiji, stunning perennial champion Tahiti.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	23	11	.676	—
Boston	21	14	.600	2½
New York	16	18	.471	7
Philadelphia	9	24	.273	13½
Brooklyn	8	25	.242	14½

Southeast Division

Charlotte	19	16	.543	—
Atlanta	18	16	.529	½
Washington	16	18	.471	2½
Orlando	16	20	.444	3½
Miami	10	26	.278	9½

Central Division

Cleveland	26	7	.788	—
Milwaukee	17	16	.515	9
Indiana	18	18	.500	9½
Chicago	17	18	.486	10
Detroit	16	21	.432	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	28	7	.800	—
Houston	27	9	.750	1½
Memphis	22	15	.595	7
New Orleans	14	22	.389	14½
Dallas	11	24	.314	17

Northwest Division

Utah	22	14	.611	—
Oklahoma City	21	14	.600	½
Portland	15	21	.417	7
Denver	14	21	.400	7½
Minnesota	11	24	.314	10½

Pacific Division				
Golden State	30	5	.857	—
L.A. Clippers	23	14	.622	8
Sacramento	15	19	.441	14½
L.A. Lakers	13	25	.342	18½
Phoenix	11	25	.306	19½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Drew Storen, Reds agree to \$3 million, 1-year contract

CINCINNATI (AP)—The Reds agreed to a \$3 million, one-year contract with right-hander Drew Storen, their first move to improve Cincinnati's historically bad bullpen.

The 29-year-old reliever can make an additional \$1.5 million in performance bonuses under the deal announced Tuesday. He would get \$500,000 if traded.

Storen went 4-3 with a 5.23 ERA in 57 appear-

ances last season for Toronto and Seattle. He had three saves in four chances. His best seasons were with Washington. He went 2-1 with a 1.12 ERA and 11 saves in 2014, and followed it with 2-2, a 3.44 ERA and

29 saves in 2015.

Cincinnati's bullpen gave up a major league record 103 homers last season and led the league in walks. Overall, the Reds allowed 258 homers, shattering the previous major league mark.

BSI

From Page 28

runs scored battle with his 21, while Acosta and Lizama are ranked second and third with 18 and 17 runs, respectively. In the doubles, Old Stars' David and Cabrera are in the Top 2 with 6 and 4, while Ben

Mesa and Nabeyuke are tied at third with three each.

Ben Mesa is also in a tie for first in triples category as he and Fleming have two apiece, while Jess Mesa is in solo first in the RBI division after collecting 17. Ben Mesa has the second most RBIs so far with 12, while Germance and Ca-

brera having 11 apiece.

In the pitching contest, the BSI Aces' Mel Sakisat finally moved up to solo first after tying two others for the lead in the early stages of the regular season. Sakisat's 1.84 ERA (19 innings pitched and five runs allowed) bested the 2.10 of GSM Masters' John Diaz

(16.2 innings pitch and five runs allowed) and the 2.33 of the former's teammate Ben Duenas (15 innings pitched and five runs allowed). Completing the pitching leaderboard were Papa Bears' Bob Lizama (2.63 ERA), Sai Sei's Darwin Masaharu (3.42 ERA), Rubak's Donald Pangelinan

(4.00 ERA), and the Old Stars' Bill Camacho (4.55 ERA).

Camacho slid from first to seventh, but is still ahead in the strikeouts category with his 30. Sakisat has 21, while Juan Diaz and Papa Bears' Nick Reyes have 12 each. The GSM Masters' Nick Guerrero and Tony Flores have 11 apiece.

DOUBLE

From Page 28

While Rollers 1 had an easy win in the boys U16 division, the squad labored for victory in the U25 division after outlasting Vibes, 51-47.

June Alipio top-scored in the close win after drilling 22 points. He had 8 straight markers in the latter part of the second half to keep Rollers 1 in the lead and answer Matt Duenas' successive baskets. Duenas finished with 23 points in a losing cause.

Alipio and Duenas were on top of their game early with the former knocking in Roll-

ers 1's first 9 points and the latter tallying 10 to help Vibes stay in the match after the first half, 19-21.

Vibes then managed to grab the lead early in the second, 24-23, but Rollers 1 regrouped with Alipio drawing help from Luiz Reyes and Aaron Ogumoro to offset the solid production of Duenas. Ogumoro nailed Rollers 1's last field goal—a triple—to seal the squad's debut win.

Meanwhile, the Ol'Aces 1 also prevailed in its first game in the U25 division after crushing the Talaabwogh Star last Dec. 28, 62-37.

The Ol'Aces 1, which was

ahead by only 7 after the first half, 24-17, broke away in the second after spreading the wealth in the final 20 minutes of play. Four Ol'Aces 1 players recorded at least three field goals apiece in the second half and three more also hit the board.

In the end, three Ol'Aces 1 players scored in double figures with Josh Andrews logging 12 points and Sid Quan and Melvin Sakisat contributing 10 each. Nak Nakashima and Christopher Tadeo combined for 12 more points for the Ol'Aces 1.

Joseph Lifoihoi paced Talaabwogh with his 13 mark-

ers, while Ace Evangelista chipped in 11.

U16 DIVISION

Rollers 1 71 – Tengco 16, Hudkins 13, Richardson 11, Factor 9, Quitugua 8, Kisa 4, Dela Cruz 3, Pangelinan 3, Valencia 2, Cobacha 2.

Gen Cup 40 – Elchico 13, Cai 12, Cruz 9, Sacdalan 6, De Leon 2.

Scoring by halves: 32-22, 71-40.

U25 DIVISION

Dec. 28 Game

Ol'Aces 1 62 – Andrews 12, Quan 10, Sakisat 10, Nakashima 8, Tadeo 4, Palino 4,

Sablan 3, Olopai 3.

Talaabwogh 37 – Jo. Lifoihoi 13, Evangelista 11, Lieto 4, Quitugua 4, Ja. Lifoihoi 2, Agunon 2, Concepcion 1.

Scoring by halves: 24-17, 62-37.

Jan. 2 Game

Rollers 1 51 – Alipio 22, Reyes 9, Ogumoro 9, Factor 4, Dancoc 3, J. Pangelinan 3, Mendiola 3, Babauta 1, T. Pangelinan 1.

Vibes 47 – Duenas 23, Santos 9, Macahito 3, Tiamzon 2, Eubanks 2, Vivero 2, Deleon Guerrero 2, Tudela 2, Mancao 1.

Scoring by halves: 21-18, 51-47.

2016 SSS Christmas Youth Futsal Tournament Winners

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Newcastle FC players pose with their trophy and medals after beating Astig in a shootout, 3-2, in the co-ed U16 finals in the 2016 Saipan Soccer School Christmas Youth Futsal Tournament last Friday at the TSL Sports Complex.



Golden Boot winners, from left, Mareko Tekopua, Guinevere Borja, Paulynn Joyce, and Rohan Basnet.



Kanoa Ali'i players and coach Cristy Villaflor, right, pose for a photo after receiving the runner-up trophy in the co-ed U12 division.



Astig players gather for a photo after getting their runner-up trophy.



Gene Weaver and his players receive the Fair Play award in the co-ed U12 division.



Kanoa Mighty Orange players and coach Brittany Wally are all smiles after taking the third place award in the co-ed U12 division.



Malo Fatu players and their coach Carlson Cruzat, right, pose with their third place trophy in the co-ed U16 division.



Thomas' 29 points, 15 assists send Celtics past Jazz

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Bengals' Pacman Jones accused of head-butting cops, spitting

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28 THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2017

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Double victories for Rollers 1



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Rollers 1 triumphed in two division games in the 2016 Tan-Holdings Christmas Basketball Tournament, while the Ol' Aces 1 won their debut in the U25 age group last week at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

In the boys U16 division, Rollers 1 whipped Gen Cup last Monday, 71-40, to take the solo lead in its group as it now has a 3-0 record. Gen Cup is at the bottom of the team standings in the eight-squad field after falling to a 0-2 card.

Three Rollers 1 players scored in double figures in the team's 31-point victory over Gen Cup. Jude Tengco led the way with his 16 points, while A.J. Hudkins and Matthew Richardson recorded 13 and 11, respectively. Richardson and Tengco had 9 markers apiece in the first half, lifting Rollers 1 to a twin-digit advantage at the break, 32-22.

Rollers 1 went on to pad its

lead in the second half with Angelo Factor anchoring the breakaway after firing 7 of the squad's first 9 points in that period. The rest

of Rollers 1 players also hit the board in the second half to complete its domination of Gen Cup.

See DOUBLE on Page 26



NMSA to select awardees for 2016



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Robbie Schorr is among the nominees for the NMSA/TSL Foundation Male Student Athlete of the Year Award, which will be decided in tonight's meeting of Northern Marianas Sports Association.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Northern Marianas Sports Association will meet tonight to select the top performers of 2016.

The association's member federations will choose the winners of the Male and Female Athletes of the Year, NMSA/TSL Foundation Male and Female Student Athlete of the Year, Team of the Year, Administrator of the Year, Coach of the Year, and Technical Official of the Year awards.

All the monthly winners of the Male and Female Athletes of the Year and Student

Athletes are nominated for the annual awards, but sports federation can still nominate those who did not make the monthly list. As for the other categories, nominations should be made in writing and must be submitted before tonight's 7pm meeting. NMSA members are also reminded to pay the annual membership fee (\$150), as failure to do so will bar them from casting their votes for the awardees.

Reigning NMSA/TSL Foundation Female Student Athlete of the Year Carol Lee of tennis leads the nominees for 2016, having won the monthly award three times

See NMSA on Page 26

BSI Aces, Old Stars players excel

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With the BSI Aces (6-1) and the Old Stars (5-2) occupying the Top 2 spots in the team standings, it is not surprising to see the two squads' players also lording it over in the statistical races in the 2016 Masters Baseball League.

In the batting race, the BSI Aces' John Acosta is ahead with his .690 average, built around his 20-for-29 performance at the plate. He is joined in the Top 5 by the Old Stars' Jess Mesa (.632/12-for-19), fellow BSI Aces players Ben Mesa (.611/11-for-18) and Reno Celis (.500/13-for-26), and Sai Sei's Taylor Germance (.500/12-for-24).

The batting leaders were based on 18 or more times at



bat and were tallied after the Dec. 30 game was completed. Ten other players made it to the leaderboard and the list includes the Old Stars' Manny Cabrera (.476), Sai Sei's Ota Nabeyuke (.474), Old Stars' Ben Tagabuel (.444), BSI Aces' Joe Tenorio (.429), Papa Bears' Jojo Attao (.429), GSM Masters' Mark Flores (.417), Papa Bears' Bob Lizama (.400), GSM Masters' Mike Sablan (.391), Old Stars' George David (.368), and the GSM Masters' Ben Hocog (.348).

The Old Stars' James Fleming was out of the batting leaderboard, but is on top of the

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A batter waits for the pitch during an earlier game in the 2016 Masters Baseball League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.